

At the Gate of Dreams



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AT THE GATE OF DREAMS

POEMS

BY

JAMES B. KENYON



BUFFALO

CHARLES WELLS MOULTON

1892

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There wrinkled age and rosy childhood meet;

There strange stars silver night's mysterious streams;

There wayworn mortals come with weary feet,

And drop their burdens at the Gate of Dreams.

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AT THE GATE OF DREAMS.

IN THE ORCHARD.

THE autumn leaves are whirled away,
The sober skies look down
On faded fields and woodlands gray,
And the dun-colored town.

Through the brown orchard's gusty aisle,
In sad-hued gown and hood,
Slow passes, with a peaceful smile,
A maiden pure and good.

Her deep, serene, and dove-like eyes
Are downward bent, her face,
Whereon the day's pale shadow lies,
Is sweet with nameless grace.

The frolic wind beside her blows,
The sear leaves dance and leap;
With hands before her clasped, she goes
As in a waking sleep.

To her the ashen skies are bright,
The russet earth is fair;
And never shone a clearer light,
Nor breathed a softer air.

O wizard love! whose magic art
Transmutes to sun the shade,
Thine are the beams that fill the heart
Of this meek Quaker maid.

A VISION OF ELD.

How have the swift-winged centuries sped!
What unguessed circuits time hath run!
Yet, though uncounted years are dead,
Shines on the same clear sun.

I see once more the vaulted aisles
That pierce the dim and cloistered wood;
Again the pomp of summer smiles
O'er all the solitude.

Light breezes from the mountain side
Bring bell-like bayings of the hounds;
While slim ears, round the forest wide,
Leap at the vibrant sounds.

Amid the trees gay pennons gleam;
And, hark! from soft-curved, supple throats,
Heard silverly as in a dream,
A peal of joy out floats.

There sweeps the stately cavalcade;
The high-born dames, the knightly men,
With whip and spur prick through the glade—
I see them all again.

I see the proudly tossing plume;
The glittering casque, the ribboned spear,
And, riding through the fragrant gloom,
Launcelot and Guinevere.

And where yon dusky branches spread
Above the queen's deep-shadowed eyes,
Sir Launcelot, with low-bent head,
Hears Guinevere's replies.

THE ROBBER.

Ay, he hath stolen her sweets and gone;
 The robber bee, upon his quest
 For honeyed booty, from the breast
Of yon fair lily now hath flown.
 In vain the south-wind wooes;
 In vain the ring dove cooes;
 Like unto some pale maid,
 The lily stands betrayed,
Her nectared bosom pillaged and undone.

Ah! sad so white a breast should lie,
 With all its stores of virgin sweet,
 Thus to be prey for plundering feet,
And spoil for any wanton eye!
 Yet many a bosom chaste
 Hath been by love laid waste—
 Light love that came and went,
 And left a life forspent
Beneath a far, serene, and mocking sky.

MY KINDRED.

WHERE in forests deep and still
Slants by mossy rims a rill—
Where the fronded ferns are stirred
By the swift, low-winged bird—
Where amid the cloistered trees
Dart the honey-seeking bees—
There I know my kindred be,
There they ever beckon me.

I am kin to sylvan things:
Where the vine-wrought roofing swings
O'er dusk coverts leafy-green,
And shy creatures frisk between
Dewy sward and swaying limb;
There from chambers cool and dim
Many a pair of twinkling eyes
Meet my own without surprise,
And my kindred welcome me
To their woodland revelry.

I am kin to every flower
Shedding perfume hour by hour,
Kin am I to grass and weeds,
And the drowsy-whispering reeds;
To the streams that part and meet,
To the wind-blown fields of wheat,
To the tressèd ranks of corn,
To the midnight and the morn.

Me the pleasant south-wind knows;
And the breath that shrewdly blows
Over many a frozen firth
Of the rude and ice-girt north,
Deftly as the hands of Time,
On my temples sifts its rime.

I have glimpsed a smiling face
Peering forth from many a place
Where thick vines and saplings grow;
And where tell-tale banks of snow,
Piled in hollows soft and deep,
Prints of lightest footsteps keep,
I have traced with subtile care
Trailing garments light as air.
Bending an attentive ear,
Through the thickets I can hear
Sounds of laughter, clear and fine;
And by tokens I divine
Truths unknown to human speech—
Secrets that my kindred teach!

IN SUMMER FIELDS.

BENEATH a leafy thatch to lie
And watch the pageant of the sky,
The banners of the morning light,
The kindling splendors of the night;
To see the lavish summer spread
Its pomp above one's quiet head;
To learn the secrets of the ground
From myriad elfin voices round;
To lie for happy hours and hours
'Mid fresh, soft-bedded herbs and flowers,
And see the insect armies pass
Along the highways of the grass;
To spy among the tangled weeds
The nimble finches gathering seeds,
Or, lost in grassy solitudes,
Some monster of the mimic woods;
To lie, and neither wake nor sleep,
But feel the pleasant coolness creep
Like waters o'er one's placid face,
And murmur round his resting-place,—
What deeper, what diviner bliss
Could weary mortal ask than this?

AT THE MEADOW BARS.

She. "No, leave me now; each silly vow
Will never move my heart, sir;
Come, stand aside! the patient cow,
Grown weary, soon will start, sir.
You my unwilling hands may take,
But thus, sir, you will never make
My young and sleeping love awake;
Come, leave me now!"

He. "O cruel lass! the summers pass,
And wane the days of wooing;
Hearts are more brittle far than glass—
Be not my heart's undoing.
What though the milking-time be here?
Our love-time, Love, is also near;
Ah, brief love's hope, but long love's fear—
O cruel lass!"

She. "The shadows fall, and night-birds call,
O sir, stay not the milking."

He. "Nay, Love, but see, the roses all
Are shed, and corn is silking."

She. "O sir, the coming night makes haste."

He. "O Love, but waiting love makes waste".

She. "Now shame, my kirtle is unlaced."

He. "But shadows fall."

She. "O sir, be true!—deep is the dew,
And milking-time is over."

He. "Ay, Love, love's waiting's over, too,
And I am all your lover."

She. "Now let me milk—you've torn my
wimple."

He. "But nay, first let me kiss that dimple."

She. "There! one's enough, dear, don't be
simple."

Both. "Love, we'll be true!"

DRIFTING.

ATHWART the silver dusk the fireflies float;

The crescent moon, above the shadowy hill,
Sails slowly downward like a little boat;

The winds are sleeping, and the night is still,
Save when amid the reeds along the shore
A ripple washes, and is heard no more.

The summer stars peer down thro' heaven's gray
 veil,

And here and there, across the misty fen,

A strange light wanders, now afar and pale,
Now near and slowly waxing bright again.

Silent past many a fairy bower we glide,
Past rocking lily-pads and dipping boughs,

By wreathing vines that sweep the dimpling tide,
By smooth-mown meadows where the mild-eyed
 cows

Lie 'mid the dews and take the night's sweet
 breath.

A subtile perfume, from the distant woods,

Steals lightly by and swiftly vanisheth
Into the night's unfooted solitudes.

Nature has charms the unanointed eye

May never see; by many a common stream

She sets her signs, and where her lovers lie
In secret places, there are lights that gleam
As beautiful and mysterious as a dream.

A PLEA TO TIME.

TAKE, oh, take thy tribute, Time:
On my forehead sift thy rime;

Bear me downward, if thou must,
Slowly toward my kindred dust.

Clog with age each trembling limb;
Press mine eyes till they be dim;

Touch my brow with magic staff,
Scoring there thine epigraph;

As thou wilt, mar form or face,
Only grant a single grace:

From thine ever-mining tooth
Spare, oh, spare the heart of youth.

Let the song of Spring's first bird
With the old delight be heard.

Still the early rose be sweet,
While the summers by me fleet.

Let the sound of rain-wet leaves
Whispering round the dripping eaves,

Winds amid the growing corn,
Voices of the breathing morn,

And the ever-vocal grass,
Sweeter be as seasons pass.

So from nature's gentle heart
Let me never, never part;

Let me take my final rest
In her cool and peaceful breast.

A SONG OF THE IDEAL.

O FACE I never saw,
That still I seek
By shadows of the shaw,
By reed-grown creek;
Through many a fern-deep hollow,
And morn-lit mead,
I follow still and follow
Where thou dost lead.

Where beaded gossamers
Like rainbows change
With every breeze that stirs;
Where wild things range
Wild ways with shy, light feet,
Through woodland dew,
Thee, O unseen and fleet,
I still pursue.

Where winter, heap by heap,
Chokes leafless dells,
And unleashed ice-blasts sweep
O'er fields and fells;
Where shivering shrubs uplift
Hands pale and gaunt,
Through many an unsunned drift
I seek thy haunt.

Where torrents from the hight
 Pour down their streams;
Where in the wavering light
 The dark pine dreams;
Where angry storm-winds beat
 And lightnings play,
I seek thy flying feet
 Day after day.

Sometimes by silvern strands,
 When sea-winds sleep,
And up the crinkling sands
 The thin waves creep,
When misty twilight falls
 And night is near,
Then from the sea's deep halls
 Thy voice I hear.

Thou of the sun-bright head,
 Hide not thy face;
Cloud-light thy breezy tread,
 Cloud-like thy grace.
O whither dost thou flee?
 Where wilt thou rest?
Still must I follow thee,
 Blest or unblest.

REAPING.

ALONG the east strange glories burn,
And kindling lights leap high and higher,
As morning from her azure urn
Pours forth her golden fire.

From rush and reed, from bush and brake,
Float countless jeweled gossamers,
That glance and dazzle as they shake
In every breeze that stirs.

A bird, upspringing from the grain,
Flutes loud and clear his raptured note,
That mingles with as blithe a strain
As e'er thrilled human throat.

Amid the tasseled ranks of corn
She stands breast-high; her arms are bare;
And round her warm brown neck the morn
Gleams on her lustrous hair.

The sickle flashes in her hand;
The dew laves both her naked feet;
She reaps and sings, and through the land
She sends her carols sweet.

The wind breathes softly on her brow;
To touch her lips tall blossoms seek;
And as the stricken columns bow,
They kiss her glowing cheek.

O happy maiden! in her breast
 Guile hath no place; her virgin sleep
Vain thoughts ne'er trouble; she is blest;
 She hath no tears to weep.

She knows nor longs for prouder things;
 Her simple tasks are all her care;
She lives and loves, and reaps and sings,
 And makes the world more fair.

IN AN OLD GARDEN.

Down this pathway, through the shade,
Lightly tripped the dainty maid,
In her eyes the smile of June,
On her lips some old sweet tune.
Through yon ragged rows of box,
By that awkward clump of phlox,
To her favorite pansy bed,
Like a ray of light, she sped.
Satin slippers, trim and neat,
Gleamed upon her slender feet;
Round her ankles, deftly tied,
Ribbons crossed from side to side.
Here her pinks, old-fashioned, fair,
Breathed their fragrance on the air;
There her fluttering azure gown
Shook the poppy's petals down.
Here a rose, with fond caress,
Stooped to touch a truant tress,
From her fillet struggling free,
Scorning its captivity.
There a bed of rue was set
With an edge of mignonette,
And the spicy bergamot
Meshed the frail forget-me-not.
Honeysuckles, hollyhocks,
Bachelor's-buttons, four-o'clocks,

Marigolds and blue-eyed-grass
Curt'sied when the maid did pass.
Now the braggart weeds have spread
Through the paths she loved to tread,
And the creeping moss has grown
O'er yon shattered dial-stone.
Still beside the ruined walks
Some old flowers, on sturdy stalks,
Dream of her whose happy eyes
Roam the fields of Paradise.

SLEEPYSIDE.

PILED against the turquoise sky
Pearl-white banks of vapor lie;
Lazily a fickle breeze
Creeps along the dappled leas.
Midway of the sleepy stream,
Ruminating as they dream,
Stand the drowsy-lidded kine,
Shaded by a clambering vine.
On the gray roofs of the town
The high summer sun looks down;
Grass is growing in the street,
Where tanned reapers, with bare feet,
Faring fieldward slowly pass,
Or some brown, slim-ankled lass,
Loitering dreamily along,
Hums a half-forgotten song.
From the latticed porches come
Breaths of honeysuckle bloom;
Sunflowers doze beside the wall;
On the rick the sparrows call.
Here no sounds of sordid strife
Fret the peaceful ways of life;
Steeped in languor are the days,
As yon slopes are steeped in haze;
Heeded less the passing hours
Than the sunshine on the flowers—

Than the bee with dusty thighs
That across the meadow flies,
Pouncing like a burly lover
On a nodding crimson clover.
Somewhere 'mid the shadows deep
Time has fallen fast asleep,
And his idle scythe and glass
By him lie upon the grass;
Thus forever let him bide
In thy thralls, O Sleepyside.

THE OLD PATH.

THIS is the path she used to know;
Still by yon ruined wall
The violets and wild roses grow,
And sparrows build and call.

Here barefoot towards the pasture-land
She lightly tripped along,
A dewy blossom in her hand,
Upon her lips a song.

I see again her soft white throat
Swell like a warbling bird's;
The clear air thrills, as through it float
The old familiar words.

And now she stands beside the bar,
And where her cattle roam,
Knee-deep in grassy dells afar,
They hear and hasten home.

O sunny locks and eyes of blue,
And face like morning skies,
And tender lips whereon the dew
As on a flower lies—

Shall I not see thee as of yore?
And if, when night is done,
I linger as I did before,
Here where the roses run,

Shall I not hear her as she goes,
Nor see her garments wave?
Ah, no! in yon neglected close
There lies her moss-grown grave.

A QUEST.

SOMEWHERE 'mid cloistered trees there lies
A spot ne'er seen of human eyes;
There all day long the shadows sleep
In woven grasses, cool and deep;
There o'er its shallows slants a stream
In which the rushes dip and dream;
All day to some tall reed there clings
The dragon-fly with moveless wings;
No bird-note wakes the slumbering air;
No piping insects revel there;
Within that quiet nook the breeze
Scarce lifts the leaves upon the trees.
It is the haunt where Peace abides,
Shy Peace that ever flees and hides
Before man's sad and weary face.
Ah, should I find her secret place,
And steal upon her silently,
Or e'er her timid feet could flee,
Might I not seize and hold her well,
And bring her captive where men dwell?

THE ODALIK.

BESIDE the fountain's marble brim
With languid steps she comes to stand;
The snowy swans before her swim,
And catch the dainties from her hand.

Her arm rests on a porphyry vase,
And from the long and heavy plumes
Of that rich fan which screens her face,
Float faint and delicate perfumes.

On each slim ankle and white wrist
The bangles chime like tiny bells;
About her, like an azure mist,
Her fluttering mantle sinks and swells.

A dreamy music fills the air,
The fountain tinkles in the sun,
The watchful swans, with stately care,
Glide slowly past her, one by one.

Her broidered garments round her flow,
And half reveal the charms they veil;
Within her jetty tresses glow
The gems that make the sunlight pale.

Her eyes look far away; she heeds
No longer those who seek her alms—
Not e'en that bolder one who pleads
With beak against her velvet palms.

Lo, as she stands, what sudden flame
Is kindled o'er her brow and cheek?
Alas, the memory of her shame!
She is the favorite odalik.

.

IN MID-JOURNEY.

AN onward traveler, lo! I stand
Midway the changed, uneven land;
A moment now I pause to look
Back o'er the path my feet forsook
A brief while since: I see the stream
Bright in the early sunlight gleam;
I see the woven branches spread
Where late I walked with naked head,
And felt the wind's touch, light and free,
Upon my forehead lovingly.
Hushed are the voices that I heard—
The laugh of maid, the song of bird;
And now the flowers forget to blow
Along the barren way I go.
No more the glancing waters run
O'er golden shallows in the sun,
Or gurgle down the fragrant bed
Where cool and green the cresses spread.
No dew is on the withered grass,
Nor shining rain; where'er I pass,
The wind stirs with a mournful sound
The dry leaves in the thickets round.
In vain I seek with longing eyes
Some sign within the sober skies,
That once again the morning light
Shall wake me to the old delight.

Behind me smiles, still fresh and sweet,
The land of youth; with lingering feet
I turn me to the onward way,
And the strange landscape, chill and gray.

ELUSION.

A SPIRIT stirs the summer grass,
And whispers to me as I pass;
I catch the gleam of flying feet,
I smell a perfume warm and sweet.

A sudden light, a rustling sound,
Fleet swiftly o'er the dewy ground,
And fade in yonder copse away,
Where lurking shadows cheat the day.

What eye hath seen that dimpled face?
Who yet hath found the secret place,
That refuge in the dim, cool shade,
Where flees and hides the laughing maid?

Ah, happy poet who may guess
The ever-changing loveliness,
The lightsome grace, the airy wiles
Wherewith coy nature masks her smiles,
And, stealing on her unaware,
Behold her when she is most fair!

THE SOLE REQUEST.

O GOD, I ask no other boon but this:
To live, and let the quiet days go by,
Feeling upon mine eyes the morning's kiss,
Or breathing peace beneath an evening sky,
While through the hours between, e'en love's least
task
Finds sweet fulfillment; nothing more I ask.

The strenuous service of the great and wise,
And the slow recompense the world bestows,
I seek not; only let me see the skies
Flushed with the early sunlight, and the rose
Pearled with the dew, and let me from the ground
Catch with quick ear each fine, elusive sound.

For me it is enough to see the grass,
And feel beneath my feet the springing sod;
To breathe the vital air as seasons pass,
And gain fleet glimpses of the skirts of God,
There on the hills where first the mornings lie,
Or on yon waters where the sunsets die.

SHE CAME AND WENT.

SHE came and went, as comes and goes
The dewdrop on the morning rose,
Or as the tender lights that die
At shut of day along the sky.
Her coming made the dawn more bright,
Her going brought the somber night;
Her coming made the blossoms shine,
Her going made them droop and pine.
Where'er her twinkling feet did pass,
Beneath them greener grew the grass;
The song-birds ruffled their small throats
To swell for her their blithest notes.
But when she went, the blushing day
Sank into silence chill and gray,
The dark its sable vans unfurled,
And sudden night possessed the world.
O fond desires that wake in vain!
She ne'er will come to us again;
And now, like vanished perfume sweet,
Her memory grows more vague and fleet.
Yet we rejoice that morn by morn
The sad old world seems less forlorn,
Since once so bright a vision came
To touch our lives with heavenly flame,
And show to our bewildered eyes
What beauty dwells in Paradise.

THE DIFFERENCE.

HER plants bloom on the window ledge;
Behind its wicker bars
Her bird still sings, and by yon hedge
Her lilies burn like stars.

Beside the walk her pansies raise
Their faces to the sun,
And round her porch, in many a maze,
The flickering vine-leaves run.

Her slender wheel has ceased to hum
Beneath her nimble hands,
And there, close-shut and sadly dumb,
Her sweet-voiced spinet stands.

The doves still flutter to her door,
And wait and coo in vain;
And passers-by pause as of yore
To hear her happy strain.

But she who, like a fine perfume,
Filled all the sunny place,
Lies in a hushed and darkened room,
With pale and moveless face.

THE DEAD PINE.

DARK against the brooding sky
Leans its scarred trunk silently;
Round each gaunt and twisted bough
No sweet breezes linger now.
Like a sin-tormented ghost
Prisoned on some twilight coast—
Withered palms and hopeless face
Pleading for a moment's grace—
So along the dim sky-line
Stands yon weird, misshapen pine.
Once the wood-bird's timid note
From its spicy glooms did float,
And the squirrel's shrill challenge rang,
As from limb to limb he sprang,
Ere along their russet bed
Its last scanty spikes were shed.
Now no voice of beast or bird
From its naked boughs is heard,
Save when, on its topmost hight,
Fierce freebooter crows alight,
And with brawlings wild and rude
Wake the echoes of the wood.
Gone, forever gone, the years,
When amid its towering peers
It did hear the tempest rave,
As the storm-rack o'er it drave.

Now it recks not though the meek
Violet brush with velvet cheek
Its shagged bark, to kiss the spring
Through its tough roots murmuring.
Ne'er for it shall fall again
Cooling dew nor freshening rain,
Nor the healing light that shone
In the summers dead and gone.

D

JOAN D'ARC.

ONCE in the fields she watched her peaceful flocks;
Light were her feet upon the sunny hills;
For her the violets smiled beside the rocks;
Hers was the silver music of the rills.

She breathed fine odors from the woody place
Where cool, deep ferns were set; above her head
The summer sky leaned like a tender face;
Along her path the morning dewes were shed.

But suddenly she heard the wild alarm
Of deadly war; then from her simple sheep,
Forth to the conflict and the battle's harm
She went like one awaking from a sleep.

Ah! when the flames rolled round her in the mart,
And cruel faces wavered through the haze
Of her fierce martyrdom,—when on her heart
Thronged the swift memories of other days,—

Perchance no thought of royal pomp and pride,
No thought of armies, nor of iron war's
Torn fields, nor of the men who fought and died,
Nor yet of stony cells nor prison bars,—

No thought of these was hers; but on her ears
Faint sounds of sheep-bells smote, as in a dream,
And a fair vision glimmered through her tears—
Her father's cottage by a quiet stream.

UNDISCOVERED.

IF we had but eyes to see
What beside our path may be—
The frail life that, to and fro,
O'er the mossy highways go—
Elfin things that, unafraid,
Scramble up a grassy blade,
Or in grottoes dim and small
Echoes wake with freakish call—
From new founts of happiness
We should quaff the streams that bless.

Joy the springing flowers feel
When the rain-clouds o'er them wheel—
How the curving rushes thrill
At the kisses of the rill—
How the leaves, when winds blow free,
Clap their tiny hands in glee—
All the gladness, pure and fine,
At our feet we should divine,
If we had but eyes to see
What beside our path may be.

If we had but ears to hear
The small voices, sweet and clear,
That ne'er cease by day or night,
The rude sounds which now affright

Would be hushed, while o'er the soul
Silver symphonies would roll
Like a tide, and sweep away
Noises of the mart's wild fray.
No more should our sleep be vexed,
Nor our waking be perplexed;
But an endless music beat
From the dust beneath our feet,
If we had but ears to hear
Nature's voices, sweet and clear.

Had we hearts to understand,
We should learn that, nigh at hand,
Magic springs of bliss upwell,
And from many a secret cell
Nature yields to earnest quest
Sovereign balm for man's unrest.
Love that never seems to be,
Peace that ever seems to flee,
Joy that masks a sunny face,
Have their hidden dwelling-place,
Not beyond the vaulted skies,
But beneath our purblind eyes,
And beside our very hand,
Had we hearts to understand.

HEALING NATURE.

“LIFT up your eyes and look upon the fields ”
That laugh with flowers and, where the yellow
grain
Stands thickest, billow like the billowing sea.
There slides a stream that, like a silver blade,
Curves westward, and beyond the mossy bridge
An azure pool lies smiling at the sky,
Its bosom set with lilies as with stars.
The heavy mantle of the cool dark wood
Is scarcely ruffled by the idle breeze,
That touches here and there a swaying leaf,
And then is gone. The songs of myriad birds
Patter among the leaves, and slant like rain
Athwart the sparkling air. In piney dells,
A thousand censers, swung by unseen hands,
Send up their fragrance till the senses thrill,
And the blood leaps with every happy breath.
Come forth, O hopeless toiler! leave thy tasks;
Leave thy heartsickness, and the weary weight
Of thy dull cares; lo! get thee to the fields,
Where thou mayst lay thy forehead on the breast
Of healing nature. Thou art tired; come
And rest; draw into all thy veins the health,
The sweetness and the fullness of the life
That throbs in earth, in sky, in sea and air.

ON THE WHEEL.

How fair they lie!—the circling hills,
Down whose green slopes the summer spills
Her lavish wealth of sun and rain,
Of light and dew. Along the plain,
The errant spice-winds, breathing balm
And scent of southern pine and palm,
Whisper amid the rustling corn
That shakes its plumes beneath the morn.
Through grassy closes, clear and bright
The brooks dance in the misty light,
And one blithe bird, loud caroling,
Dips in the flood a glancing wing.
The flowers that bloom beside the way,
The glistening hedge, the thorny spray,
And myriad beaded blades of grass
Sparkle with diamonds as we pass.
Hark! from the field the farmer's song,
And answering echoes, sweet and long,
Redouble round the emerald vale,
Till o'er the wold they faint and fail.
Still as we pass on noiseless wheels,
The changing landscape glows and reels;
The flaming sun, high and more high,
Mounts up the cloudless summer sky;
We catch the shouts of lads at play
Amid the fragrant new-mown hay,
And sounds of shrill-voiced grigs that sing,
And whetted scythes that cheerly ring.

Through many a shifting scene we flash;
We hear the busy mill-wheel dash;
We hear the shaft that creaks and groans,
The ceaseless whirring of the stones;
Then on we fare; the clattering mill
Is left behind, and all is still.
Ay, all is still; high noon o'erhead
A popped influence hath shed;
The very insects cease to hum,
And all the breathless world is dumb.

Still on with noiseless wheels we go,
Till in the west the sun dips low—
Till whip-poor-wills begin to call,
And o'er the fields slim shadows fall.
Along our way the midges spin;
Hushed is the day's melodious din,
While piping voices, far and near,
With sweet lamenting vex the ear.
The forest aisles are still and dark,
Save where the firefly lights his spark;
And o'er the marish by the way
A mist is rising, ghostly gray.
Now softly glows the evening star
Above us; we have ridden far,
And night is come; a sound of bells,
Like sudden music, sinks and swells
In yonder vale, and through the night
A lamp shines like a beacon-light.
Ah, happy inn! ah, happy guest!
How sweet is night! how sweet is rest!

AN INCOMPLETE ANGLER.

THE bearded grass sways to and fro,
As o'er the fields light zephyrs go;
The reeds nod by the river's brink,
Where birds come down to lave and drink.
Upon the wave the lilies ride;
The trailing vines dip in the tide,
And countless frogs, screened in the sedge,
Boom all along the water's edge.
Here, where the shadows round me wait,
I'll sit and cast my luring bait.
Above my leafy canopy,
The summer clouds float dreamily;
The sun, high o'er the cool dark wood,
Smiles down upon the twinkling flood;
The busy insects round me hum;
The stealthy herons go and come;
A butterfly, with gorgeous wings,
To yon tall flag one moment clings,
Then with a sidewise wavering flight,
Rises and flutters out of sight.
Still I my luckless victim bide;
I watch where frolic sunbeams hide
Deep in the bosom of the stream;
I see his burnished armor gleam,
As round and round the tempting fly
He circles oft and warily.

Why should a fish refuse to dine
 From such a dainty hook as mine?
 I'll wait and watch him yet. Ah me!
 The day is warm. How drowsily
 The flies drone near! The river flows
 Like sluggish Lethe; I shall doze
 If nature thus my senses steep
 In languor—but . . I . . must . . not . . sleep.

* * * * *

Old fellow, are you waiting yet
 To taste my hook? . . The grass is wet!
 How now—the dew is falling? No! . .
 Yes, in the west the sun is low,
 And shadows lie around me deep;
 It must be that I dropped asleep.
 O Isaak Walton—honored ghost!—
 Didst e'er thus slumber at thy post?
 But see, the fireflies round me flit!
 I wonder if that rascal bit:
 The hook is gone! . . and snell gone too!
 There's nothing further left to do,
 But meekly wind my idle reel,
 And homeward fare with empty creel.

THE WORLD'S WAY.

At morn I heard them say:
"Beware of him; some day
He will abuse thy trust;
Then in the common dust
Thine idol shall be cast.
Beware of him; at last,
Who knows but he may turn and rend,
Brute-like, the hand of his best friend?"

At eve I heard them say
Where calm the dead man lay:
"Alas! we shall not see
His like again; for he,
True to the very end,
Did ne'er betray a friend."
Thus low they spake beside the dead,
Nor thought what they at morn had said.

THE TWO PATHS.

THERE are two ways which, every morning-tide,
Before the hurrying feet of men divide:
Along one path the pleasant light is shed;
The birds sing gaily; smiling skies o'erspread
The happy earth, and the sweet air is rife
With myriad throbbing sounds of busy life.
About the other path the mists hang low,
And darkness gathers o'er it, deep and slow;
From unseen valleys sweeps an icy breath,
And whoso walks there, treads the way of death.
Two paths there be—one wherein fareth life,
With patient weariness and honest strife;
And one where labor finds its sure surcease,
And haunting voices ever murmur "Peace."
Go wheresoe'er thou wilt, or east or west,
Two paths there be—who knoweth which is best?

AN OLD-FASHIONED GIRL.

OLD-FASHIONED? Yes, I must confess
The antique pattern of her dress,
The ancient frills and furbelows,
The faded ribbons and the bows.
Why she should show those shrunken charms,
That wrinkled neck, those tawny arms,
I cannot guess; her russet gown
Round her spare form hangs loosely down;
Her voice is thin and cracked; her eye
And smile have lost their witchery.
By those faint jests, that flagging wit,
 By each attenuated curl,
She surely is, I must admit,
 An odd, old-fashioned girl.

'Tis long, long since she had a beau,
And now with those who sit a-row
Along the wall she takes her place,
With something of the old-time grace.
She yearns to join the mazy waltz,
And slyly sniffs her smelling-salts.
Ah, many an angel in disguise
May walk before our human eyes!
Where'er the fever smitten lie
In grimy haunts of poverty,

Along the dark and squalid street,
 'Mid drunken jests of boor and churl,
She goes with swift and pitying feet—
 This same old-fashioned girl.

LILAC BLOSSOMS.

So long—ah, so long ago!
But the world is not so fair,
And never such bland south winds will blow,
Nor such lilacs scent the air,
As in those old sweet days
When the feet of the luminous hours
Sped swiftly down the grassy ways,
And the meadows laughed with flowers.

Her eyes were clear as the morn;
Her hair, like a golden net,
Had meshed the light; and the pink-white thorn,
Or the slender violet
Plashed with the crystal drops of rain,
Was not so fresh as she;—
With the green young spring she comes again
Like a fragrant memory.

O lilacs heavy with dew,
Thy delicate purple plumes
Bring back the days when life was new,
And the lanes were fringed with blooms;
When the skies bent down with peace,
And the earth with music thrilled—
When it seemed love's song would never cease.
And youth's glad heart was filled.

LOVE'S SORCERY.

WHERESOEVER thou goest, Sweet,
Peace shall go before thy feet;
Forth shall gush the song of bird,
And the blossoms, faintly stirred,
Shall breathe incense, fine and rare,
On the love-enchanted air.
Round thy pathway, for thy sake,
From the ground a light shall break,
And thy footsteps shall be set
With the mint and violet.
Greener hills shall slope away
Where the mild-eyed cattle stray;
Fairer skies shall arch thee o'er
Than the world hath known before.
Not a fear shall shake thy heart;
Spent shall be Grief's venom'd dart
Ere it reach thee; thou shalt go
Where life's crystal fountains flow.
For a wizard, wondrous wise,
Round thee weaves his sorceries,
And the earth shall changèd be
By his sovereign alchemy.
Thou to nature shalt be dear;
Subtlest music thou shalt hear
In the sounds of gurgling springs,
And the faery chime that rings

Where the grasses, cool and wet,
Screen the glimmering rivulet.
Thou shalt hear, o'er pleasant leas,
Slumberous murmurings of the bees,
And the grasshopper's shrill tune,
Through the long bright afternoon.
Night shall bring thee healing dew;
And the viewless hand that strews
Precious balm of Paradise
On the flowers' closèd eyes,
Shall with silken touches woo
Thee Sleep's rosy portals through.

Howsoe'er the seasons fleet,
Kindly stars shall o'er thee meet;
Love shall minister to thee,
And thy life shall charmèd be.

MINE ADVERSARY.

THOU mine adversary art,
Thou, love, that with ruthless dart
Didst so sorely wound my breast.
Lo! thou camest as a guest,
And as such I welcomed thee
To my hospitality.
My poor roof I bade thee share,
Bade thee taste my frugal fare—
Amber honey, wine and bread;
And when thou hadst supped, I led
Thee to my warm ingle-nook,
Cheering thee with song and book.
Thou my welcome didst betray;
Thou my kindness didst repay,
Caitiff-like, with swift despite;
For, in silence of the night,
When the darkness was most deep,
And the world was hushed in sleep,
Thou didst rise to do me wrong;
Thou didst bind me fast and strong.
And while thus I helpless lay,
Thou didst steal my peace away,
Thou didst rob me of my joy,
Thou didst make my heart thy toy—
As a target for thy skill,
Thou didst pierce it at thy will;

And whene'er I prayed to thee,
Thou didst mock my misery.
Now I have escaped thy hands;
Sundered are thy silken bands;
Thou shalt never vex me more—
Lo! I spurn thee from my door.
Pass! henceforth I'll none of thee;
Let thy ways be far from me;
For howe'er the years may go,
Thou shalt be my dearest foe.

NOT IN VAIN.

AWAY from the haunts of men, from the feverish,
godless strife

Waged in the noisy marts, I fled to the templed
wood;

My eyes were dim with tears, I was sick of the
cheat called "life,"

And the venom of hatred swept like flame
through all my blood.

Where the gloom of the wood was deepest I cast
me prone on the ground,

And covered my face from the day, and wished
it were all at an end,

When suddenly up from the earth, like the beating
of hearts, came a sound,

And over me, patient and pure I saw a violet
bend.

And my anger that fiercely smoked was quenched
as I gazed on the flower;

I knew that God was near, though veiled was
His luminous form;

And down on my troubled heart fell the healing
dew of His power,

And I learned that our lives not in vain are
bowed like reeds in the storm.

IT SHALL BE KNOWN.

OVER and over I con it, and over and over again,
But somehow I cannot learn it—the meaning is not
plain.

Yet surely I some time shall know how, out of the
darkened past,
And out of the shrouded future, light shall be
gathered at last.

Is it better indeed to have loved, though it be to have
loved and lost ?

Answer, ye who have been caught, and harried, and
wildly tossed

In the palms of a fickle chance, till the years are
well-nigh done,

And the grief and passion are spent, and the half
of life is gone.

O riddle too hard to read! O arid and wasted years!
O thoughts that deepen and deepen beyond the
touch of tears!

For the watching, remembering and waiting, for the
hungering of the heart,

For the soul's ineffectual crying, and for the bitter
smart

Of pain returning daily, shall there not come, some-
where,

A recompense, a guerdon, an answer to the prayer

Of faith that strives and wrestles? Ah yes! the
lesson old
Shall be learned at last—the riddle shall be forever
told.

THE CAGED BIRD.

O SOUL, fret not against thy bars;
 Thou art a caged and weary thing;
 Above thee calmly wheel the stars
 And night's vast psalm forever sing.

Sing thou, nor let the dying light,
 Nor trooping shadows, dim and long,
 Nor ghostly mists that veil thy sight,
 Affray thy faith, and hush thy song.

The twilight deepens—be at rest;
 Now fold thy bruised and drooping wing;
 And till at length this prisoning breast
 Shall burst and free thee, bravely sing.

A SONG OF THE HILLS.

FRONTING the wide-browed east they stand;
Slowly beneath God's mighty hand
They rose and took their shape; the dews
Distill upon them; heavenly blues,
And rainbow purples, from which lean the stars,
Lightly o'erarch them; down their rugged scars
 Pour balms of dark and light.
 How fair the sight
Of cliff and glen, of oak and pine,
And ever-upward clambering vine,
And long green sweep of brambly slope!
Where slanting sunbeams shyly grope
Through leafy screens, along its bed
Of moss, 'twixt gnarlèd roots, with stealthy tread
The cold stream seeks the vale.
Here, while the heavens yet are pale,
On her wide altars morning burns
Her mystic incense: through the ferns,
And flowers, and creepers, and thick boughs,
Old Nature's truest devotees
 Send up their matin vows
 And vesper harmonies,
 Day after day.
From every dew-plashed spray,
From blooms where linger long the plundering bees,
From frail herbs crushed by careless feet,
And buds scarce breathed on by the breeze,
Exhale rare odors, fine and fleet.

Here, where the night and the morn first meet,
 Are myriad melodies, wonderful, sweet.
 Hark! how the heart of the dawn doth beat!
 Whisperings, stirrings, rustling of wings,
 Sounds like swift fingers swept o'er a harp's strings—
 Sounds shot with silence, with silence that groweth,
 That round through the aisles and the dim arches
 floweth

Like a stream lapping low, laughing loud 'mid the
 grasses;

 Till suddenly passes
 A spirit that hushes one instant the breath
 Of the earth and the sky to the stillness of death—
 One instant a pause in the pulse of the dawn,—
 One instant the joy of awaking withdrawn.

 O moment supreme
 'Twixt waking and dream,
 'Twixt longing intense
 And throbbing suspense!

But listen! the liquid, soft note of a bird
 Wakes the world from its spell, then another is heard,
 Till lo, with a crash, from the sky and the ground
 Bursteth a tempest of musical sound!

 O fear, thou hast fled!
 Thou, silence, art dead!
 Thou, joy, hast awaked from the thralldom of sleep,
 And the dark tides of sorrow are turned back to the
 deep.

 Lay thine ear to the earth,
 And harken what mirth
 Through fairy-land riots, because of the birth

Each moment of flowers and fair green things,
And the mystic unsealing of magical springs
 In the heart of the hills!
 What rapture thrills
Through the roots and stems of the braided weeds,
And quivers and shivers amid the reeds
 That watch by the streams,
 Because from their dreams
In the womb of the dark have been wakened to light
The souls of new plants to people the height.

 Here trade shall not come,
 And the voice shall be dumb
Of hard-hearted Thrift; yea, even the stroke
Of the ax that is laid to the root of the oak
 Shall sound muffled and far:
 For barter and gain
 Belong to the plain,
 And there they shall bide,
 Whatever betide.

 Here the wheels cannot jar
Of commerce that thunders and shrieks on its way,
But the tremulous shadows fantastically play
Through bickering leaves, and small black eyes
Twinkle from glooms where the dewberry lies,
And the garrulous squirrel, and the finch, and the jay
Gossip the fleet-footed summer away.
And here from the pearlèd fields of morn,
On the viewless wings of the winds are borne
Perfumes sweeter than nard or myrrh.
O pungent fragrance of pine and fir!

What delicate scents from the indolent east,
 That are shed for the Sultan, as he sits at his feast,
 Can vie with the balsam's resinous breath
 To quench in the blood the fierce fever of death?

Hark! while the dusk's pale curtain falls,
 Across the dim, gray upland calls
 The twilight-loving whip-poor-will.
 O night, brood softly o'er the hill!
 Fair night, your vast star-spaces fill
 With tender lights that shall not wane
 Till morn shall wake the world again.
 Thus in the shadow of God's hand,
 While o'er the sky the dark is fanned,
 Upon the hill-top let me stand.
 How near is heaven! how near each star!
 The noisy world how far! how far!
 O soul, for flight thy wings expand;
 Look yonder to the promised land;
 From such a height, with fond desire,
 Ere from the earth, in clouds of fire,
 The ancient seer was rapt away,
 He looked and saw the starry dome
 And kindled glories of God's home,
 Nor wished to stay.
 O height! O height! thrice blessèd height!
 Upon thee calmly rest the night,
 And sweetly break the morning's light
 Above thee;
 He who would flee the world's vain strife,
 And find a larger, nobler life,
 Must love thee.

THE KING IS DYING.

Fool, stand back, the king is dying,
Give him what little air remains;
See'st thou not how his pulse is flying?
Hear'st thou not how he gasps and strains
To catch one other stertorous breath?
God! how he labors! yes, this is death!

Blow up the fire—his feet are cold;
Ay, though a king, he cannot buy
One briefest moment with all his gold;
His hour has come, and he must die;
Withered and wrinkled, and old and gray,
The king fares out on the common way.

Light the tapers; he's almost gone;
Stir, thou fool, 'tis past the hour
To cower and cringe, and flatter and fawn—
The thing lying there is shorn of power;
Henceforth the lips of the king are dumb:
Bring up thy ghostly viaticum.

Absolve his soul; need enough, God wot!
Mumble and sprinkle and do thy shriving;
Yet, methinks, here and there shall be left a blot,
Hideously foul, despite thy striving;
Nor purfled quilts, nor pillows of lace,
Can relieve the guilt in that grim old face.

Soft! stand back—it is his last;
Get hence, thy priestly craft is o'er;
For him the pomp of the world is past—
The king that was, is king no more:
Let the bells be rung, let the mass be said,
And the king's heir know that the king is dead.

GUILELESS EYES.

As WITHIN a crystal well,
In her eyes the sunrays dwell;
'Mid their clear, pellucid deeps,
Her untroubled spirit sleeps.
Though the world's wild tempests blow,
Calmly mirrored, far below,
The unwavering image lies
Of the far, o'erarching skies.
There the happy dreams of youth,
Thoughts of purity and truth,
Maiden visions of delight,
Girlhood memories, golden-bright,
That within her soul are born,
Linger like the smiles of morn.
Guileless eyes! O may the years
Dim them not with grief and tears,
May no breath of sin and dole
Mar those mirrors of her soul;
There, as in a crystal well,
May her peaceful spirit dwell.

AT BETHLEHEM.

THE Syrian stars are burning low;
The winds are laid, the night is still;
The waking shepherd paces slow
About his sheep-cote on the hill;
And oft he turns to watch the skies
With wistful, dim, sleep-burdened eyes.

Still closer creep the huddled flocks
Within the shelter of the fold;
The hoar-frost whitens on the rocks,
The thin grass stiffens with the cold;
Still slowly, o'er the shadowy ground,
The shepherd foots his weary round.

Hist! over Bethlehem's sleeping town
What sudden strains outleap and swell?
Behold! a star sinks slowly down
And glows above one lowly cell
Where lies a mother, wan and pale,
Hushing her new-born Infant's wail.

Lo! far along the flashing cope
Gleam angel forms with folded wings;
A strange light silvers every slope,
And through the vault of heaven rings
This song, again and yet again,
"On earth be peace, good will to men."

O tired mother, take thy rest!

O Judah's hills, awake and shout!

And from the east and from the west

Let voices of the vales break out,

To hail the Babe whose feet shall press

The world's dark ways to save and bless.

MIDNIGHT AT BETHLEHEM.

AN, silent the sleeping hills!
Silent the large cool night!
Far eastward, where the morn first spills
Its fires, a little light
Kindles athwart the dark.
Through heaven's blue concave, hark!
'Mid star-sprent spaces vast and dim
Rolls a majestic hymn,
Lapping like waves on cloud-coasts pale;
Yet through the music breaks a Babe's low wail—
A Babe that cradled in a manger lies
Where hornèd oxen stare with patient eyes.
But lo! yon eastward flame streams up apace;
And now, behold! above the lowly place
Where weeps the Babe, a clear orb burns,
And all the stooping heaven yearns,
While travelers come from far,
Led onward by the ever-moving star,
Till in that humble stall they wondering meet,
And bow with gifts before the Christ-Child's feet.
O clap your hands, ye hills! be glad, ye skies!
O longed-for Splendor, dawn and bless the eyes
Of weary watchers waiting in the night
The coming of the true and only Light.
Loud and more loud, ye spheres, the anthem swell!
To hail Immanuel

Let midnight doff her starry diadem,
And welcome now the Babe of Bethlehem.

Ah, stupid eyes close sealed in selfish sleep!
Ah, stolid ears long dulled with slumber deep!
Ye ne'er may know again
A night like this; the star begins to wane
Already, and the chorus of the skies
Withdraws far up the azure cope and dies.
The morn shall break, as it hath done before,
For you, but never, never more
Such wonders shall be known.
E'en now the night is o'er;
Behold! the King hath come unto his own.

THE COMING OF THE KING.

THE darkness folds the sleeping world;
The stars are quiet in the skies;
The low moon, like a feather curled,
Upon the faint horizon lies.

About his sheep-cote on the hill
The weary shepherd paces slow;
Within, the huddled flock is still;
Without, the frost-winds shrewdly blow.

Ah, breathless hour of hopes and fears!
Hark! through the solemn midnight hush,
From myriad sudden-brightening spheres,
A million quiring voices rush.

Yea, sing, ye trembling morning stars!
With music break the awful spell;
O Phosphor, burst your radiant bars,
And burn o'er Bethlehem's lowly cell!

But list! above cherubic hymn,
More clear than anthem of the sky,
Up from yon stable rude and dim
Quavers an Infant's feeble cry.

O earth, be glad, thine hour hath come!
O happy winds, the tidings tell!
Clap all your hands, ye forests dumb!
Ye mountains, hail Immanuel!

Now shall the ways of men be blest;
Now from the world shall lift the night;
From north to south, from east to west,
Shall stream the ever-growing light.

Let every sound of sorrow cease,
And Eden's songs be heard again;
O'er all the earth henceforth be peace,
And evermore good will to men.

IN THE STORM.

LORD, now the light hath vanished, be Thou near;
Within the awful darkness may we hear
The reassuring words that Thou dost speak
Across the swelling waters. We are weak;
Still at the laboring oars we toil and strain,
And thro' the waste, void night we peer in vain
For any beacon. Every star hath fled,
And the hoarse thunder bellows overhead;
Our shuddering craft is driven to and fro,
As the fierce billows smite it, blow on blow;
The tempest o'er us loud and louder raves,
Beneath us wider yawn the gulping waves.
O be Thou near! Lift up Thy voice of peace,
And bid the elemental conflict cease;
Disperse the shadows from the shrouded skies,
And bless with morning light our longing eyes!
Across the angry surges send Thy word;
O speak and save us, or we perish, Lord.

RISEN.

ERE yet the shadowy mountain tops
Were silvered with the light,
Or off the lilies slipped the drops
Won from the dewy night;
Ere yet the morning's incense curled
O'er glimmering Galilee,
The grave had yielded to the world
Its awful mystery.

Through all the night the pallid stars
Watched trembling o'er the tomb,
And Olivet wrapped all its scars
Deep in the fragrant gloom;
The world one instant held its breath,
When from the flashing heaven
God's angel swept, more strong than death,
And death's dark bonds were riven.

Forth from the sepulcher's embrace
Behold the Conqueror come!
O morning sun, unveil thy face!
O earth, no more be dumb!
From century to century
The pæan now shall ring—
O grave, where is thy victory?
O death, where is thy sting?

THE CHILD THAT WAS.

WHERE is the child that used to be,
That knew the small folk of the lea,
That saw them frisk in the dew-wet grass,
And heard them pipe when the wind did pass;
That knew what the nodding daisies said,
And why the trefoil hung its head,
And marked how the violets, purple-sweet,
Whispered love at his happy feet;
That caught the inarticulate words
Trolled by the summer-haunting birds,
In meadow nooks where dusty bees
Flitted on honeyed embassies,
While drowsily their deep bassoon
Chimed with the fountain's silver tune;
The child to whom night brought the slow,
Large, yellow planets burning low,
And dawn, a world most fair to see,—
Ah, where is the child that used to be?

Fled, alas! with the vanished morns,
With the wind's glad songs and the elfin's horns;
Fled forever and ever away,
While a care-worn man keeps watch to-day,
With wistful face and tear-dimmed eyes,
Above the tomb where his childhood lies.

BYLO-LAND.

WHAT do they do in Bylo-land,
Silvery, shadowy Bylo-land ?
They swing no bat, they fly no kite;
The tattered dolls are forgotten quite;
But out through the gates of the City of Night
The little ones glide in garments white
To beautiful Bylo-land.

What do they hear in Bylo-land,
Glimmering, mystical Bylo-land ?
Ah, little ears hear wonderful things:
Snatches of song that mother sings
When the light sinks low, and the rocker swings;
And lullaby sounds from hidden springs
In the hills of Bylo-land.

How win them back from Bylo-land,
Magical, emerald Bylo-land ?
When the last faint star in heaven dies,
And the dusk grows wan where the mountains rise,
When the great sun climbs the yellow skies,
Then mother's kisses on drowsy eyes
Woo back from Bylo-land.

SANBENETTO.

AND will ye clothe us thus in shame?
Think ye the scarlet vestures meet?
Shall they not perish in the flame
That shall be kindled at our feet?

Yea, shall these hateful robes withstand
The fiery floods that, high and higher,
Shall round us roll, as with fierce hand
Ye thrust the roaring fagots nigher?

Or, who shall say that—while ye cry
“Down, Antichrist!” and mock the sight
Of our last sufferings—as we die,
These may not change to robes of light?

SONG FOR THE SLAIN.

LIFT and drift, O mists, away;
River, sing amid thy reeds;
Break, O silver light of day,
And across the dewy meads
On the grasses and the weeds
Make their million jewels gleam;
Tip the waves on every stream
With thy swift and sudden fire,
And, where leaves of forests dream,
Strike the wind's invisible lyre,
Wake the morning's wingèd choir,
Till the raptured earth shall be
Drenched with showers of melody.

O how good it is to live!
O how sweet this vital breath!
Precious are the days that give
Warm release from winter's death,
Till with every bud set free
On the south-kissed shrub and tree,
And with every springing flower
Fed by April sun and shower,
In our own hearts blossom fair
Hopes we never knew were there.

Still our joy is mixed with pain
For the faces that are fled—

O the spring breathes all in vain
O'er the barrows of our dead!
They shall never waken more
To the battle's sullen roar,
To the smoke and lurid flash,
To the frenzied shout and clash.
'Round them never shall again
Tides of combat sweep the plain.
Whistling shot and screaming shell;
Flames that seem to leap from hell;
Gory hoofs of many a steed
Trampling wounded men who plead,
Shriek, and pray while none take heed;
Muddy streams whose waters flow
Bloody-dark, and thick and slow;
Upturned faces here and there,
Bearded, bronzed, or young and fair,
Now grown strangely still and white
While around them swells the fight;
Tattered flags and scattered arms;
Fleeing men whom vague alarms,
Seizing in the conflict's surge,
To some hidden refuge urge—
From such scenes their eyes are sealed;
Death hath won and holds the field.

Never shall the bugle-sound
Call them from their sleep profound,
To behold with smoke-dimmed eyes
How a comrade falls and dies,
Smitten by the leaden hail,
Or the cannon's iron flail.

From the cheerful bivouac fires;
From home-songs and home-desires;
From the dark and silent camp;
From the night-mists, chill and damp;
From soft dreams of child and wife—
Of the old and happy life—
Of the pasture-lands of home
Where the tranquil cattle roam—
Of the brawling brook where played
Barefoot urchins in the shade—
Of the dear, mild mother's face
That bent o'er them in the place
Where their childish prayers were said
When the joyous day had fled—
Of the maid whose timid eyes
Smiled through tears her fond replies
To the questions old and sweet,
While the blossoms at her feet
(Fragrant still in memory)
Were not half so fair as she—
From such dreams they shall not start,
With fierce tuggings at the heart,
Still the weary march to share,
Or into the battle's blare
With a wild and nameless pain
Go to slay and to be slain.

Let them rest where nodding clover
Covers husband, friend and lover,
Where the long cool grass leans over,
And the stars their watches keep;
Where with drowsy murmurings

Haunt the bees with tireless wings;
Where all night the cricket sings,
 Let them sleep.

No more shall the loud alarms
 From their grassy tents on the hill
Summon the sleepers to arms;
 But the sunshine, warm and still,
Shall sift through the fronded palm,
 From the blue-domed southern sky,
To nestle through hours of calm
 O'er the sod where the brave ones lie,
 Unknown in their narrow bed,
 Asleep with the world's great dead.

And O, bend low, ye North's pale skies,
 O'er many a humble stone
That marks where some true man lies
 Till the angel's trump be blown;
To-day as in love bend low!
 Soft be the suns and the showers,
And light be the winds that blow,
 Over these heroes of ours.

Ah! Memory, let the world forget
 Her deeds of darkness and of shame,
But while the sun shall rise and set,
 A thousand thousand years the same,
Keep bright the glory and renown
 Of those who fought by land and sea,
Brave men who laid their brave lives down,
 That man might still be free.

Ye widowed hearts, your bitter tears
Through all the long and lonely years
God hath regarded, for He hears
 The troubled when they cry;
Your loss becomes the world's rich gain;
Henceforth above your noble slain
The seed once sown in tears and pain
 Shall bloom in liberty.

OMAR KHAYYÁM.

AH, shed long since the roses that he knew,
And fled the perfume and the morning dew;
 And dead the vine from out whose purple fruit
Refreshment for his fading life he drew.

As when some awkward slave lets fall the shape
Of clay she bears, and through the rents agape
 The precious liquid pours, so careless Death
Broke the frail jar and let his soul escape.

Along the garden where his feet did pass,
The steps of aliens bruise the springing grass;
 And not one careless eye hath noted how
Still on the turf lies an inverted glass.

There at dim nightfall, when the moon is pale,
Within the laurel sings the nightingale;
 And through the gathering darkness, from the
 ground,
Elusive breaths of fragrant wine exhale.

JOY COMETH IN THE MORNING.

PRETTY Annie Atherton (why is her face so pale?)
Stands on the rocky headland yonder, watching for
a sail;
The sky is gray and lowering, all night the wind has
blown,
And round the dreary shore the breakers moan, and
moan, and moan.

She has not slept through all the hours—her heart
has ached with fears,
And in her lonely chamber she has sat, and through
her tears
Has watched for tardy dawn to light at last the
darkened east;
And now the morn is come, and still the tempest
has not ceased.

'Twas yestereve she lightly laughed and said a blithe
“good-bye”—
The wind was soft, the sea was calm, and cloudless
was the sky;
Ah, how the storm-rack suddenly drave o'er the
shuddering sea!
God pity those brave toilers now, wherever they
may be!

Pretty Annie Atherton—she heeds not how her hair
Is rudely tossed and tangled on the gusty headland
there;

She heeds not how the salt wind smites, nor how her
gown is blown;

She only hears the cruel breakers moan, and moan,
and moan.

O'er all the deep the white-caps leap: "O love,"
her brave heart cries,

"I wait thee as I promised thee"—the wind alone
replies;

Yet see! a sudden sail speeds up the offing, dim and
gray—

O'er all the deep the white-caps leap—alas! 'tis
flying spray.

Pretty Annie Atherton—her eyes with mist are blind;
The breakers moan—she does not hear the swift,
light step behind;

He nearer draws—the wind is harsh, and heavy are
her ears;

Now fold and hold her close, strong arms—love, kiss
away love's fears.

ESTRANGED.

THEY met, and all the world was fair;
Fair, too, were they, as any pair
Of birds of paradise;
They met, and never meant to part,
But oh! time chills the warmest heart,
And dims the brightest eyes.

They met, and love betwixt them born,
From morn to dark, from dark to morn,
Walked with them through the land;
O, blithely sped the singing hours,
Till, lured to pluck the star-eyed flowers,
Each loosed the other's hand.

Then love took flight with sudden fright,
And now they wander through the night,
Blind with their helpless tears;
They grope amid the thorns and sand,
But cannot touch each other's hand
Through all the lonely years.

A HUNDRED YEARS.

SHE stands beside the sylvan stream,
The chief's one daughter, lithe and fair,
And, as she stands, a last late gleam
Of light lies tangled in her hair.

The boughs droop down above her face,
The grasses kiss her naked feet,
And one tall reed leans from its place,
To touch her bosom warm and sweet.

Behind her lies the quiet camp,
Before her the calm waters flow,
She sees the firefly light its lamp,
She hears the night-wind, faint and low.

The sunset dies upon the hill,
The valley fades in deepening gloom,
But where she stands, her presence still
Sheds on the shadows light and bloom.

She looks away into the west,
Her eyes brim o'er with happy light,
A song upbubbles from her breast,
She scarcely heeds the falling night.

But hark! a paddle softly dips;
A swift hand thrusts the leaves apart;
The song is hushed upon her lips,
While sudden tumult shakes her heart.

For lo! he stands before her now—
Her lover, young and strong and brave,
Above whose dark and fearless brow
The plumes of eagles proudly wave.

A hated warrior's valiant son,
Though years of feud have sundered wide
His sire from hers, has wooed and won
The dusky maiden for his bride.

A clinging kiss, a passionate word,
A lingering, doubtful look behind;
Low pleadings that are hardly heard,
And eyes with tears confused and blind.

Then silent steps that do not pause;
Then long light dippings of an oar;
A boat into the darkness draws,
And fades from sight forevermore—

Fades and is gone: a hundred years
Have passed since that dim summer night
When, half in triumph, half in tears,
These lovers vanished out of sight.

And now beside that self-same stream,
With many a clustering bough above,
I lie and dream a world-old dream,
Beneath the eyes of her I love.

NORA.

SHE stands in the light of the setting sun,
Till the bright bars vanish, one by one,

And the stars are hung in the azure dome,
Like lamps, to guide lost spirits home.

Thus she has watched through the weary years,
Through moments of hope and months of tears—

Watched at twilight pale and gray,
While ever the slow years crept away—

Watched and waited for one to come
Back, over the wide wild prairie, home.

He went when her cheek was fresh and fair,
And the sunlight slept in her yellow hair;

When her eyes were blue, and her lips were red—
As sweet a bride as was ever wed.

But now she is old and wrinkled and gray,
For the years have fretted her beauty away,

And dim are her eyes that were once so blue,
Yet her love is loyal, her heart is true.

So she waits and waits while the sun goes down,
And over the prairie, naked and brown,

The shadows come stealing, big and black;
For he said, "Wait, Nora, till I come back,"

And he passed away through the gathering gloom,
Away o'er the prairie, rich with bloom—

Whistling he passed through the deepening dusk,
Through the twilight sweet with the scent of musk—

To seek the kine that had gone astray;
But he never returns by night or day.

"Ah me! Ah me!" she softly saith,
While her blue eyes shine with a mystic faith,

"He seeketh far, he seeketh yet,
But he will come back, he will not forget."

So day after day, as the night draws on,
She stands and waits at her door alone—

Waits while the sun sinks out of sight,
And she stands alone with the vast dim night.

Ah, yes! ah, yes! he hath gone afar,
For where the tremulous evening star

Gleams like a gem o'er the heart of the west,
He fell on sleep, on sleep and rest—

On sleep that is sweeter than we know here,
On rest unvexed by hope or fear.

Above his lowly and lonesome grave,
The long, strong grass and wild flowers wave,

And the shadows of morning and evening play,
While he slumbers the years of her waiting away.

But lo! one evening when sunset burns,
And in patient sorrow she waits and yearns,

Up from the shadowy earth he shall rise,
Like an angel of light to her dying eyes,

And shall touch her hand and say, "Love, come,
Behold, the dear Christ calls us home;"

For the ties of love that here are riven,
God will unite again in Heaven.

THE PRESENT.

WHAT matter we have suffered, dear, and borne
A thousand pangs, when we are lying low?
What matter that we drank the lees of scorn,
And wept beneath our griefs, as we weep now,
When from our dust shall spring the matted thorn?

What matter, dear, that you and I have kept
Hearts sweet and tender through ungracious years,
When in the sepulcher we shall have slept
A thousand moons, and dried are Memory's tears,
And Love sings by the tomb where once he wept?

I know when we are gone the flowers will bloom,
And in their seasons leaves will go and come,
And nesting birds will sing above our tomb;
But still, what matter? We shall both be dumb,
And locked in silence and eternal gloom.

What matter, dear, though spring and summer wane,
And winter come with chilling sleet and snow,
Or on our graves the flowers weep in rain,
Or on our graves the flowers forget to blow,
What matter, dear?—we cannot then feel pain.

Should others love as you and I have loved,
What matter?—we shall mingle hearts in dust:

Should others prove, as you and I have proved,
The faith of men, nor forfeit Heaven's high trust,
What matter?—they shall move as we have moved.

Come, come away! O, now we will not mourn,
For that which is not; and the past is past;
Though faded joys shall nevermore return,
Neither shall faded griefs, the first or last,
And time's true heir is of the present born.

O love, what may be shall not cloud the heart,
Nor steal joy from the present, which is ours;
Now, *now* we'll clasp, and laugh at death, nor part,
But make these, which we have, most golden
hours,
And when the Dread Voice calls, together start.

THE MOHAWK.

THOU windest down between the hills,
Past many a gleaming lawn and lea,
The tribute of a thousand rills
To bear toward the distant sea.

'Twixt level fields of wheat and corn,
By many a cool and quiet wood,
Past founts where singing streams are born,
Thou rollest down thy silver flood.

Within thy wave the shadows play;
Along thy banks the blossoms bloom;
And to and fro, through all the day,
The swallows sweep from sun to gloom.

Unchanged thy voice; still sweet and low
Thou murmurest to the leaves and grass,
And happy winds that o'er thee blow
And lightly kiss thee as they pass.

The lordly Hudson waits for thee;
With throbbing heart and smiling face,
He greets his bride right royally,
And folds her in his wide embrace.

And thus espoused, ye sweetly flow
Down to the boundless azure sea,
As loving souls together go
Into God's vast eternity.

THE OLD STORY.

THROUGH tangled grass the rill sobbed by,
We saw eve's red sun glow;
The peaceful herds were browsing nigh,
The village slept below.

A trailing ivy, like a wreath,
Drooped down upon her hair,
And she who, blushing, stood beneath
Knew she was very fair.

The pomp of the declining day,
The beauty of the place,
Around us like a halo lay,
And shone upon her face.

We lingered there with many a sigh,
And many a whispered vow;
I saw the tear steal from her eye,
I saw her clouded brow.

Afar we heard the minster bell;
Slowly the day went out;
Then, as the twilight round us fell,
I told her all my doubt.

Like sunshine shot through April skies,
Her smile flashed through her tears,
And while I dried her beauteous eyes,
She kissed away my fears.

O fickle tears! O faithless vows!
O fond, delusive trust!
Love weeping goes with hidden brows,
And wings low in the dust.

QUATRAINS.

I.

THE TWO SPIRITS.

I DREAMED two spirits came—one dusk as night:
 “Mortals miscall me Life,” he sadly saith;
 The other, with a smile like morning light,
 Flashed his strong wings, and spake, “Men
 name me ‘Death.’”

II.

CAPRICE.

AH, lover, marvel not the maid, once kind,
 Should wound thee now with words of sudden
 scorn:
 So shifts from change to change the freakish wind;
 So every rose wears, poniard-like, its thorn.

III.

LOVE'S PARADOX.

SHE would not stir a single jetty lash
 To hear me praised; but when my life was
 blamed
 Her parian cheeks were kindled like a flash,
 And from her heart a sudden love upflamed.

IV.

THE POET.

THE poet is the heir of every clime;
He gathers spoil from all the years of time;
He reads Fate's holograph with vision clear,
And sees a rainbow smiling in a tear.

NEW LIFE, NEW LOVE.

AH, what awaits us when the glimmering sight
Is slowly quenched within the gathering night;
When on the hills the purple shadows fall,
And lingering darkness hides and covers all—
 New life, new love?

Than is the old could new life sweeter be?
Than now hath love some rarer ecstasy?
Ah, while the day shines, and it grows not late,
Say not there dwell beyond the night's dark gate
 New life, new love.

IN REALMS OF GOLD.

THE CRICKET.

PIPER of the fields and woods
And the fragrant solitudes,
When the trees are stripped of leaves,
And the choked brook sobs and grieves;
When the golden-rod alone
Feigns the summer hath not flown;
Then while evening airs grow chill,
And the flocks upon the hill
Huddle in the waning light,
Thou, ere falls the frosty night,
To the kine that homeward pass
Pipest 'mid the stiffening grass.

Dark may dawn the winter days,—
Where thou art the summer stays;
Though the ruffian north winds roar,
Lash the roof and smite the door,
Thou from hearths secure and warm
Laughst at the brewing storm,
And thy merry minstrelsy
Sets the frozen fancy free.
Dost thou dream, O piper brave,
That from his sea-haunted grave
He who praised thy song of yore
Hath come back to hear once more,
Through high noons, thy strident strain

Borne o'er Enna's saffron plain?
Long, long since the nectared hoard
That the yellow bees had stored
In the turf above his head
Hath, by many a passing tread
O'er the chamber of his sleep,
In the dust been trampled deep.
From his lentisk couch of rest,
In his shaggy goat-skin vest,
He shall rise no more to hear,
With the poet's raptured ear,
O'er the thymy pastures swell
Morning sounds he loved so well.
Other skies are over us,
And afar Theocritus
Slumbers deep, O piper small,
And he will not heed at all
Though be struck thy shrillest notes;
Yet a voice like thine still floats
O'er him where thy shy kin be
'Mid the dews of Sicily.

BY THE BROOK.

O'ER it slender osiers lean,
And its waters purl between

Banks of moss where violets grow,
And the wind breathes sweet and low.

'Mid its rushes minnows hide,
Or o'er silver shallows glide,

Pausing oft as if to dream,
Poised against the wavering stream.

Here the birds light on the brink,
Plash their dusty plumes, and drink;

There where deeper waters run,
Broad-leaved lilies take the sun.

By this willow let us lie;
It may chance that, bye and bye,

If we watch and make no sound,
While the midges murmur round,

We shall see him unafraid
Stumbling down the sun-flecked glade,

With his goat-hoofs tearing through
Vines and blossoms wet with dew.

We shall see his shaggy thighs,
His puffed cheeks and gloating eyes,

And his hairy pointed ears,
Sharper grown with ceaseless fears.

We shall see him as he stands,
And with swift and nimble hands,

From the reed-beds, where they grow,
Plucks him pipes whereon to blow,

Notching each with eager skill,
Tossing each aside, until

From some slim and hollow shoot
He shall shape a pipe to suit

His wild fancy; then the day
Shall grow dumb to hear him play.

Hist! behold yon trembling bough;
It may be Pan cometh now.

PAN.

I'LL seek him yet: in some warm nook
He lies asleep beside the brook,
Drugged by the spicy gales that pass;
His pipe beside him on the grass
Lies but half trimmed,—just as it fell
When sleep cast o'er him her soft spell.
I'll seek him yet: he does not hear
The bee that drones beside his ear,
Half buried in the nectared gloom
Of some sweet-burdened, purple bloom.
Above him droop the cooling leaves;
His shaggy bosom falls and heaves,
In his deep slumber's quietness;
He will not hear me, though I press,
Through woven bough and vine and flower,
Quite into his sleep-charmèd bower.
Ah me, how soundly he hath slept!
How well the mossy wood hath kept
Its secret old! The poppièd gales,
Blown softly by, have told no tales
Of sleeping Pan, while far astray
His white flock goes this many a day.
I'll seek him yet: somewhere he lies
Well screened from peering human eyes;
And though his hoof-marks, as I know,
From mortal sight passed long ago,

Still I will tread the sylvan aisles
And sunny meadows, miles and miles;
I'll follow hard the dragon-fly,
As down the stream he circles by;
I'll track the wild-bee from his home
To that fair place whence it hath come,
Where, hoarding still their honeyed store,
Bloom such rare flowers as starred of yore
The shining slopes of Arcady.
So I will seek him yet; ah me!
Though human foot hath never trod
The leafy lair where lies the god,
Who knows but by some happy chance
I yet may rouse him from his trance!

A MEMORY OF THEOCRITUS.

THUS will I lie, on this green couch of leaves
Stript from the wayward vine, and while the brook
Beneath its slender osiers sweetly grieves,
And elfin echoes haunt each shadowy nook,
I'll hearken how, among the rocks o'erhead,
The fountain tinkles down its narrow bed.

Cool in this dim recess the breath of day
Is softly blown, and from the humid moss
Thin exhalations rise, that steal away,
Elusive as a dream; the branches toss
Their emerald brede above me, and below,
Far down the kine to lush pastures go.

Sweet sounds and odors fold me like a sleep;
A wood-bird whistles from its piney bower;
A maiden's silvery laughter mounts the steep;
And dreamily from one tall purple flower
That o'er me slowly vibrates, censer-wise,
Fine wreaths of fragrant incense seem to rise.

O singer who, in honeyed Sicily,
Long years ago upon some morning height,
Did'st hear the droning of the vagrant bee,
And saw fair Enna smiling in the light,
I'd half believe thou hadst come back again,
Should goat-hoofed Pan but pipe a sudden strain.

SILENUS.

SEE the beast on which he rides
By the dewy forest-sides,
All his huge, loose-belted girth
Shaking with his boisterous mirth!
Now his rough head back he tips,
And with pursed and eager lips,
Swollen cheeks and gloating eye,
Drains a vine-wreathed flagon dry.
Hark! within the hollow wood
Wake the echoes wild and rude.
Goat-hoofed satyrs dance with glee,
And, to swell the revelry,
Shag-eared fauns the riot lead,
Blowing each a notchèd reed.

So the braying beast he strides
Bears him on, and on he rides,—
Old Silenus, wanton, gay,
Recking not where winds his way,
If again his heavy ear
May the voice of Bacchus hear.
Noisiest of his noisy crew,
He has sought the forests through;
In the gnarled and moss-grown trees
Hid the timorous dryades,
And from many a fountained glade
Fled the white-limbed nymphs afraid.

There, where lately passed his train,
Lie the tender wood-flowers slain;
And the spray, so rudely dashed
From yon stream through which he splashed,
Scattering crystals far and wide,
Scarce has from the young plants dried.
Now around yon distant height
Wends the masking throng from sight—
Old Silenus on his quest,
Seeking Bacchus without rest.

Ah! the earth with years is hoar,
But the scene comes back once more,
And the sylvan arches ring
With the sounds of reveling;
Still amid his reeling rout
Forth he rides with song and shout,
Through the dales of Arcady,
Seeking where the god may be,—
Couched, perhaps, 'mid dusky firs,
Or, where happy vintagers
High their osier baskets heap,
By some wine-press, fast asleep,
While his tawny pards bask nigh,
Stretched at ease beneath the sky.

THE FAUN.

I CHANCED upon him in the early morn;
He stood beneath the vine-roofed trellises,
All heedless of the yellow-belted bees
That fumed about him; in the ripened corn
The reapers sang, and through the grove of pine
A clear-voiced neatress called her straying kine.

With osier crates poised on their heads, and bare
Brown necks and dimpled shoulders all aglow,
The vintage-girls were passing to and fro
Along the dewy slope; the morning air
With sudden laughter rang, and on the steep
The frolic echoes wakened from their sleep.

I caught the twinkling of his hairy ears;
I heard his eager murmurs, as he plucked
The purple clusters, and the nectar sucked
From wine-red cores; his ever-watchful fears
Were drowned a moment in the mad delight
Wherewith he reveled in my wondering sight.

He stood tiptoe and stretched his naked arm
To draw the heavy-fruited branches near;
I saw him crush the glossy orbs, and smear
His cheeks with crimson; then in wild alarm
He heard my stealthy footsteps, and amid
The wattled vines he swiftly fled and hid,

He scarcely snapped a bind-weed in his flight,
Or frailest tendril; long I sought in vain
Through leafy glooms, but found him not again:
The dew dried on the grass, the mellow light
Brimmed all the misty valley, but the faun,
Fleet as a vision of the morn, was gone.

THE SATYR'S THEFT.

DIDST thou see him as he fled?
Down this dewy way he sped,
Crashing through the tangled copse,
In a shower of pearly drops
Pattering from the tremulous eaves
Of the pleached and glossy leaves.
See how, in his wild retreat
Through the wood, his flying feet
Crushed the fragile blossoms down;
And those matted shreds of brown
Clinging to yon stunted thorn
From his shaggy vest were torn.
It was in the shady nook,
Where the swift and shallow brook
Spreads abroad its waters clear
In a mimic mountain mere:
Hither she had come to lave
In the cool, pellucid wave;
As she leaned to bathe her face,
Suddenly his rude embrace
Compassed her; his hairy arms
Circled all her snowy charms.
O'er his dusky back and side
Her dark locks outfloated wide,
And I caught a fleeting glance
Of her bosom's fair expanse,

And her features scared and white,
As he vanished from my sight.
Vain it were to follow him
Through the forests deep and dim;
Human eye hath never seen,
Human face hath never been,
Where the satyr's lair is made
Far within some sylvan glade.
There the wild bee winds its horn;
There the breezes, morn by morn,
Bring the balm from unknown flowers;
There through all the poppied hours
Golden light lies on the grass,
And the flickering shadows pass;
But no mortal foot shall tread
Where the satyr makes his bed.

TACITA.

SHE roves through shadowy solitudes,
Where scentless herbs and fragile flowers
Pine in the gloom that ever broods
Around her sylvan bowers.

No winds amid the branches sigh,
No footfall wakes the sodden ground;
And the cold streams that hurry by
Flow on without a sound.

Strange, voiceless birds from spray to spray
Flit silently; and all day long
The dancing midges round her play,
But sing no elfin song.

The haunting twilight ebbs and flows;
Chill is the night, wan is the morn;
Through this dim wood no minstrel goes,
No hunter winds his horn.

No panting stag seeks yon dark pool;
No shepherd calls his bleating sheep
From sunburnt meads to shadows cool,
And grasses green and deep.

Across her path, from reed to reed,
The spider weaves his gossamer;
She recks not where her footsteps lead,
The world is dead to her.

Her eyes are sad, her face is pale,
Her head droops sidewise wearily;
Her dusky tresses, like a veil,
Down ripple to her knee.

How many a cycle hath she trod
Each mossy aisle, each leafy dell!
Alas, her feet with silence shod
Ne'er flee the hateful spell!

DAPHNE.

“WHICH way went she? Hast thou seen
Any signs where she hath been?
Hast thou marked the trembling grass
Droop where her light feet did pass?
By this woodside did she glide?
In the nooks where she might hide—
In the dingle, in the dell—
Hast thou sought the maiden well?
Haply down the path she fled
Thou mayst find a tell-tale shred
From some bramble fluttering still,
Or beside the shrunken rill,
Where she crossed it at a bound,
Spy her footprints on the ground.
Somewhere she hath stayed her flight;
In some thicket, couched from sight
On brown needles of the pines,
Laughing softly, she reclines.
Listen! didst thou hear o’erhead,
Where the bay’s wide branches spread,
Silver accents faintly fall
Like a murmur musical?
Daphne, cease thy vain elusion;
Leave, my love, thy shy seclusion;
Come whence thou art deftly hiding,
Come nor fear Apollo’s chiding.”

In the laurel's shade he stood,
And his cry rang through the wood.

Then amid the leaves above
Sighed a gentle voice: "O love,
Go thy way—thy search is o'er,
Thou mayst never see me more;
And though, prisoned in this tree,
I can never come to thee,
From Apollo's fierce endeavor
I shall rest secure forever."

A MAID OF SICILY.

She heard the waves creep up the sand;
Her hair, by roving sea-winds blown,
And careless of the prisoning band,
Down fluttered to the azure zone
Girt lightly round her perfect form,
And clasped beneath her bosom warm
Which like twin lilies shone.

The dew gleamed on her sandaled feet;
Her clinging robe around her trailed;
Her eyes with morning light were sweet;
And on her brow, that flushed and paled,
As love and fear passed o'er her face,
Was throned a rare and virgin grace,
Such as earth's dawn first hailed.

Her face was seaward turned; her eyes
Looked southward, where the amber light
Was mixed with purple in the skies,
And one fair hand, to shade her sight,
Against her chaste young brow was raised;
And so she stood, and seaward gazed
Across the waters wide and bright.

She saw the level sunrays burn
Along the mid-sea's heaving breast;
She saw the circling heavens spurn

The utmost billow's tossing crest
Where, on the blue horizon's rim,
A galley's sails rose, white and dim,
And all her blood leaped with unrest.

She knows that sail; love's eyes are keen;
She knows you dancing back is his;
From distant coasts where he has been,
From Cyprus, Tyre, and Tripolis,
Her lover brings the alien freight
She prizes not, to those who wait
More precious is love's first warm kiss.

He homeward brings the costly dyes
The Romans love, and nard, and myrrh,
And unguents which the Emperor buys,
And silks, and spice, and fruits which were
Sun-steeped on far Phœnician hills;
But not of these she recka; love fills
Along the happy heart of her.

So let her watch, while clearer rise
The sails which she has waited long;
The sun climbs higher up the skies;
The sea wind greets her, salt and strong;
Her robe from one white shoulder slips;
Her breast is bare; and from her lips
Half tremble little words of song.

IN ARCADY.

UP from yon myrtle valleys incense curls,
Blue in the balmy morning; barefoot girls,
With silvery laughter bubbling, like clear rills,
Forth from their dewy lips, trip up the hills,
Brushing the twinkling jewels from the grass,
That scarcely bends beneath them as they pass.
Bright robes that half reveal their budding charms
Flow lightly round them; and their dimpled arms,
That bear in woven baskets fruits and flowers,
Glow in the sunlight. Yonder are the bowers
Of Ceres, to whose shrine these offerings
Of field and grove each happy maiden brings.
And hither also in the smiling morn
Come goodly youths with braided ears of corn,
And stems of purple grapes and pomegranates,
And shining berries, olives, figs and dates.
Now let the dance begin upon the green,
And while the sound of music drifts between
The pleachèd branches of the leafy wood,
Waking sweet echoes in the solitude,
Let twining hands, light feet, and songs and mirth
Be joined, in Ceres' praise, to gifts of earth.
And hark! from height to height the shepherds call;
Adown the hill the laughing waterfall
Leaps to the plain; the bees begin to hum,
And in the glen the partridge beats his drum.

In shady dells, where well the crystal springs,
The naiad laves her limbs and softly sings,
While overhead, from out the oak's thick screen,
The amorous dryad leans to view the scene,
Nor dares to stir a leaf from place, for fear
She sink into the wave and disappear.
Still round the shrine of Ceres, maze on maze,
The dancers featly foot and chant her praise;
The incense upward floats amid the trees
That o'er them stretch their emerald canopies;
Still from the heights the shepherds blithely call
Their bleating flocks; the jocund waterfall,
Flashing the golden sunlight back again,
Still gambols down to seek the amber plain,
And spread abroad its waters clear and cool
That mimic heaven in an azure pool,
Nigh whose fringed marge a drowsy dragon-fly
Upon a lily-leaf sways dreamily,
And Pan, 'mid rushes and rank water-weeds,
To shape some sweeter pipe, still plucks the reeds.

ECHO'S LAMENT.

HERE in the shadows, on my changeless bed
Beneath the somber trees, I long have lain;
Day after day, above my weary head
The sad leaves rustle, and the chilly rain,
Slow dripping from each gnarled and twisted
bough,
Shatters its big drops on my flinty brow.

The tangled brakes decay about my feet;
The shaggy moss creeps o'er my rigid face;
Afar I hear the young flocks faintly bleat,
And baying hounds upon the frantic chase;
But none make quest for me; the years go by,
And still amid these hateful glooms I lie.

Ah! when the large, cool-breasted Night hath
drawn
Her star-wrought mantle from the waking world,
And on the hills, where gleam the feet of Dawn,
The trailing banners of the mist are furled,
Then, O Narcissus, while the woodlands ring,
Dost thou not miss me by thy silver spring?

And when, at noon, on murmurous summer days,
O'er thymy meadows drone the yellow bees—
When shy wild creatures frisk through leafy ways,
And fragrant blossoms clasp thy dimpled knees—

Then, as thou bendest o'er thy fountain clear,
And look, and yearn, dost thou not wish me
near?

Deep in this twilight solitude I dwell,
And as the languid seasons wax and wane,
I know the thralldom of my stony spell
Shall ne'er be banished, nor my heart's old pain;
But, O my love, no lightest breeze shall blow
About thy path that shall not breathe my woe.

A ROMAN QUEEN.

IMPERIOUS on her ebon throne
She sits, a queen, in languid ease;
Her lustrous locks are loosely blown
Back from her brow by some stray breeze
Lost in that vast, bright hall of state,
Where thronging suppliants fear and wait.

A dreamy fragrance, fine and rare,
Of sandal, nard and precious gum,
With balmy sweetness fills the air,
And mingles with the incense from
A quaint and costly azure urn,
Where Indian spices ever burn.

A jeweled serpent, wrought in gold,
Coils round her white and naked arm;
Her purple tunic, backward rolled,
Reveals the full and regal charm
Of her fair neck and ivory breast,
Half veiled beneath her brodered vest.

Her eyelids droop upon her eyes,
And curtained by the silken lash,
The smouldering fire that in them lies
Is scarcely seen, save when a flash,
Like that which lights the polar snow,
Gleams from the dusky depths below.

Her proud, cold lips are lightly wreathed
In smiles, as if with high disdain
She scorns to show her hate is sheathed,
And that he sues not all in vain
For favors of her haughty will,
Or e'en love's rarer guerdon still.

He stands before her white and fierce;
His bosom with swift passion shakes;
His burning vision seeks to pierce
Her very soul; he pleads; he wakes
Within her heart a wild desire,
That flames and mounts like sudden fire.

A subtle glance, a whispered word,
A waving of her perfumed hand,
He feels his secret prayer is heard—
That she will know and understand;
The queen is hid, and for a space
A love-swayed woman holds her place.

He bows, he leans toward the throne;
Her breath is warm upon his cheek;
She murmurs, and in every tone
He hears the love she dares not speak;
What though the surging hundreds press?
No eye shall see her swift caress.

Let him beware; he toys with fate;
False as the glittering serpent is
On her white arm, her love to hate
Shall change eftsoons; then every kiss
She gives him with her fickle breath
Shall be surcharged with secret death.

THE SONG OF BACCHUS.

COME, satyrs, from the arbored vine;
Silenus, leave the shady wood;
And quit, O Pan, the reedy flood,
And those shrill, silly pipes of thine.

Ho! shepherds, leave beside the spring
The chaste, cold nymph, and on the hill
Thy nibbling flocks let rove at will;
Come down to laugh, and dance and sing.

Here lissome maids, with lifted arms
And dangled clusters, lightly trip;
Here laughter wreathes each rosy lip;
Here beauty half unveils her charms.

Ye know me well; my stained mouth
My rounded limbs, my tangled hair,
My supple body, smooth and fair,
My cheeks like summers of the south;

I am the vintage god; I go
Where'er the grape's blood gurgles through
The fat-ribbed press. O merry crew,
Come while the purple vats o'erflow!

THE TYRIAN'S MEMORY.

WHAT stars were kindled in the skies,
What blossoms bloomed, what rivers ran,
I know not now; how wide the span
Of years which dimly stretch between
That morn I saw the big sun rise,—
Blinking upon the dazzling sheen
Of banners in the Grecian van,—
And this, no tongue shall tell, I ween.

On helm and shield, on sword and spear,
The sun shone down exultingly;
No son of Tyre knew how to flee
Before the face of any foe,
Nor would our women shed a tear,
Though face to face with speechless woe,
And heart to heart with misery;
For *fear* a Tyrian could not know.

There came the sound of clashing arms,
Of catapults and falling stones,
Of shouts and shrieks, and stifled groans,
While men stood on the crumbling wall,
And recked not of the dire alarms,
But saw their brave compatriots fall
And heard the crunching of their bones,
Then closed with death, unheeding all.

I know not how the battle fared,
Though Tyre, "the ocean queen," is dead,
And lowly lies her crownless head,
Amid the ashes of her pyre.
Few were the warriors that were spared
The spear, the flying dart, the fire;
Into my heart an arrow sped—
My eyes were closed on falling Tyre.

I have forgot how tenderly
The olive ripened on the hill;
How sweetly, when the nights were still,
The nightingale sang in the grove;
How soft the moon was on the sea,
How low the mourning of the dove;
For my dead heart no memories thrill,
Save the glad memory of my love.

O, like the footsteps of the morn
Her footsteps gleamed along the street;
Her shining, foam-white, sandaled feet
Fell lightly as the summer rain
On stones which grosser feet had worn;
And, but my heart so long has lain
In ashes, it would wake and beat
At thought of meeting her again.

Her hair was dark as Egypt's night;
Her breasts shone like twin nenuphars;
Her brave eyes burned like Syrian stars
That morn she pressed her lips to mine,

And bade me forth unto the fight;
My blood shot through my veins like wine;
I felt myself another Mars—
In thew, in life, in love divine.

Who knows that on the emerald zone
Which belts the changeless azure sea
Another city yet may be,
More fair than Tyre? Nathless, I wis,
Howe'er the phantom years have flown,
The wrinkled world must ever miss
That Tyrian maid who gave to me
Her first, her last, her farewell kiss.

THE BURDEN OF ÆDON.

WHEN the twilight, cool and dim,
Wraps the hushed, leaf-curtained limb,
While the slant rays of the sun
Climb the branches one by one,
Till each topmost bough, like fire,
Upward shoots its slender spire,
Then I grieve, and hear again
The faint sobbing of my slain.

Doomed to beat with pinions bright
'Round the dazzling fields of light,—
Every troubled cry I make
(Lest my burdened heart should break)
Heard of shepherds o'er and o'er
As a song and nothing more,—
To the night I turn for peace
And my sorrow's brief surcease.
Yet whene'er I fold my wings,
From the shadowy silence springs
Still that haunting voice of pain,
The faint sobbing of my slain.

All things sunny welcome me,—
Fruited vine and breezy bee,
Thickets where pale violets hide,
Thymy banks with blossoms pied,

Prosperous meads where sickles flash,
Fountains whose cool waters splash
'Mid the seamed and mossy rocks
Where the shepherds wash their flocks.
Hateful—hateful—hateful all!
Still I long for night to fall,
Night that comes with nameless fear,
When amid the leaves I hear,
O'er the cold and misty plain,
The faint sobbing of my slain.

LACONIA.

B. C. 480.

BENEATH the summer stars they part;
No weak and unavailing tear
Shall from her down-dropt lashes start,
In token of the nameless fear,
The hopeless pain, the bitter smart,
That storm the white gates of her heart.

Dark braided tresses, soft and fine;
Sweet eyes that love hath made more sweet;
Warm, dimpled lips as red as wine;
And in the sward her naked feet,
Half hid by woven flower and vine,
Pale through the balmy darkness shine.

The glimmering dew is on the grass;
The distant sea moans in the night;
The vagrant breezes sigh and pass;
The folded flocks bleat on the height;
But naught can charm them now; alas,
Earth is not fair as once it was!

For they must part; beyond the hills,
Beyond the blue Corinthian sea,

Past Dorian steeps that flash with rills,
O'er vine-clad fields of Thessaly,
He fares to where the war-cry thrills,
Where courage dies, and hatred kills.

His heart is brave; he loves his land;
He answers valor's high behest;
But, oh! he loves the warm white hand
He holds against his aching breast.
Ah, 'twixt what thorny ways they stand!
How stern is duty's swift command!

A kiss, a sigh, a low farewell;
He fades into the misty dark,
And faint and fainter down the dell
His footsteps fall: she waits to hark—
While in her heart strange passions swell—
How from the wood grieves philomel.

CERES.

SUN-TANNED she sits amid the sheaves;
Above her lisp the cooling leaves;
Beside her feet her sickle shines,
Half-hid by woven weeds and vines.
Her dusky tresses ripple down
About her arms which, bare and brown,
Are clasped across her knees; her eyes,
Wherein a dreamy shadow lies,
Look out athwart the shimmering field
Where stalwart, swart-armed reapers wield
Their flashing blades, and laugh and sing,
Till all the pleachèd copses ring.
The fruit of long desires she sees
Wave golden in the rustling breeze;
Hers was the bounteous, unseen hand
That morn by morn across the land
Scattered the generous dews and rains,
Till over all the amber plains,
And up and down the purple slopes,
Dimpled the joy of harvest hopes;
So now she sits with task nigh done,
The while the mellow autumn sun
Beholds the consummation fair
Of all her labor and her care.
And well content she hears the song
Trolled by the reapers all day long,

And sees the tireless sickles glance
Amid the grain; the votive dance
She knows full well shall circle soon
Beneath the ruddy harvest moon,
When lissome limbs and tripping feet,
And twining hands that part and meet,
Shall sow with amorous prophecy
Another harvest yet to be.

THE FATAL TEST.

DOWN through the lilled valley, where waters are
foaming and falling

Into the rocky basin, cool and mossy of rim,
Down through the fields and the woodlands, 'mid
wild things hiding and calling,

He comes where green flags wave, and reeds
stand tall and slim.

Hark to the sound of his lyring!—no thin and dis-
cordant noises,

But music that sinks and swells till the ravished
winds grow whist,

While the full-brimmed streams and the birds
silence their jocund voices;

And the whispering trees bend low and hush
their leaves to list.

Brighter Apollo's coming than that of the flame-
footed morning;

Swift from his glorious presence shadows and
darkness flee;

O thou by thy doting flock, O Marsyas, hear and
take warning,

Tempt not the god to pause and test his skill
with thee.

What are thy reed-notes frail to strains that are
thus outshaken

From flashing strings that throb and thrill with
immortal pain?

Sweet are the sounds of thy fluting, and the
echoes thou dost awaken,

But with the lyre of the god to match thy pipe
were vain.

* * * * *

Flow down, O stream bereavèd, amid thy reeds
low plaining;

O bleating flock, ye wander far from the wattled
fold;

Crushed is the shepherd's pipe, and the day is
slowly waning,

But Marsyas will not heed, though the evening
dews be cold.

COME BACK, DEAR DAYS.

COME back, dear days, come back, O days long fled!
Alas, the shining days of old are dead!

No more white arms through shadowy copses gleam;
No more fair shoulders part the rippling stream;
Through piney groves no pink-lipped, laughing
Hours

Dance hand in hand, and garlanded with flowers;
From fruit-heaped shrines no fragrant vapors rise
Into the azure deeps of smiling skies.

When summer airs soft over Enna blow,
No shepherd's plaintive piping, sweet and low,
From distant grassy uplands lightly steals,
And softly dies along the listening fields.
The hymns that through the woodlands rang are
hushed;

Long since was dried the bubbling fount that gushed
Beneath the hill, and purled amid its brede
Of rushes, where Pan notched his idle reed.
No more the Huntress winds her breezy horn
From steep to steep, and in the early morn
No rosy maids lead up the mountain-side
A milk-white steer, sleek-limbed and gentle-eyed,
While dewy vale and rocky heights prolong
With echoes sweet the sacrificial song.
Ay, shaggy Satyr, fleeting Nymph, and Faun,
The youthful joy and freshness—all are gone;

For we have fallen and on evil days and sad,
On clanging marts of trade where men go mad,
On vapid pleasures, and on sorrows vain;
So come again, dear days, come back again;
Re-people our unhaunted groves and streams,
And fill our arid lives with happy dreams.

SONGS IN ALL SEASONS.

THE RE-AWAKENING.

A VOICE upon the hillside wakes,
A rill begins to laugh and leap,
And nature starts, and stirs, and breaks
The silence of her long, white sleep.

The soft, warm coverlet of snow
That veils her lovely limbs and face
She lightly flings aside, and so
Arises in her vast, nude grace.

But now her bright new robe of green
Is o'er her gleaming shoulders thrown,
And many a stream of silver sheen
Is girt about her like a zone.

Oh, she is fair; her cheeks and brow
Are softly bathed in April rain;
And, standing under yon green bough,
She hears the robin flute again.

Old memories kindle in her breast;
Her eyes look forth through floating tears—
Tears not of sorrow; she is blessed;
God gives her youth through all the years.

God gives her youth with each new spring;
Her winter's long, mysterious swound
Is but her life's refashioning—
A healing of time's every wound.

O soul, lift up thy voice and sing;
The seasons utter forth this truth—
Thy winter past, behold! one spring
Thou'lt wake, clothed in immortal youth.

WHEN BLUE BIRDS FIRST APPEAR.

WHEN blue birds first appear,
And flute o'er wasting snows
Their greeting sweet and clear;
When the first pale violet blows
In the hollow under the hill,
And the Earth's faint pulses stir and thrill,
As Spring's light footsteps steal
O'er meadows brown and stark;
When o'er the budding orchards reel
The throbbing stars through balmy dark,
And the forest's humid gloom
Is dense with rare perfume,—
Then once again from its deep,
Long, troubled, and sorrowful sleep
My heart shall awake to mark
How even the barrows of death
Grow green at the Spring's warm breath.

THE BELATED DAFFODILS.

WAKE, sister daffodilly, wake!
The buds their barren slumbers break;
The trailing willow, by the stream,
Roused from its long and wintry dream,
Shakes all its silken tassels free.
The robin's jocund minstrelsy,
And early bluebird's velvet note,
About the fields and orchards float.
No more the hurtling March winds pass,
But low, sweet sounds of growing grass,
Of rustling herb and tender flower,
Rise from the green turf hour by hour.
Wake, sister daffodilly, lo,
From out the south mild breezes blow;
Along the wood-paths, warm and wet,
Springs up the frail wood-violet.
Already from its soft brown bed
The crocus lifts its drowsy head,
And stares with slow and wondering eyes
Into the changeful April skies.
Wake, sister, here 'tis damp and dark;
Leap from thy chilly couch, and hark
How peal the waxen lily-bells,
To call us from our gloomy cells.
Too long hath slumber sealed our eyes;
Our mates have risen; let us rise

And take from hence our upward flight;
Let us go seek the pleasant light.
The cattle browse upon the hill,
The blossoms nod beside the rill,
The bee darts by on vagrant wing,
The birds from dewy copses sing,
And in fresh closes, to and fro,
The whistling plowmen blithely go.
Dear sister, from these chambers cold,
Beneath the damp and gloomy mold,
Where winter-tranced we long have lain,
We'll flee to seek the light again.
Dost see the day, dear, as we rise?
Hark to the insects' mellow cries!
Ah me, how sweet the south's warm breath!
How fair is life! how dark is death!
Lo, all the world is bourgeoning,
And this, dear sister, this is Spring!

SONG OF THE SPRING.

BLUE lies the light upon the hills;
Keen scents of earth steal freshly up,
Mixed with the winy air that fills
The valley like a mighty cup.

Warm winds, blown hither from yon wold,
Come laden with the breath of flowers,
And songs of brooks are blithely trolled
Through all the slumb'rous, sunlit hours.

From far afield, yet sweet and clear
Above the mingled sounds of Spring,
Through all the mellow day I hear
The swinging sower lightly sing.

Like flakes of newly fallen snow,
The blossoms flutter from the trees;
And like far music, faint and low,
I hear the murmur of the bees.

Ah, soul! how good it is to be!
The pulses of the very sod
Awake, and stir mysteriously
Beneath the quickening breath of God.

There is no death; the years shall bring
Thee nearer to some viewless goal,
Where bloom perennial flowers of Spring,
And singing streams forever roll.

DANDELIONS.

WHAT unseen power hath wrought this wondrous
change?

It was but yestermorn the dull brown mold
Grew by some sudden magic, new and strange,
Bright with these starry flakes of living gold.

Ah, can it be that olden tale is true?

Hath Phrygian Midas journeyed thro' the land,
And while men slumbered and the southwind blew,
Let fall these golden discs from out his hand?

A RAINY DAY.

O BLESSÈD, blessèd rainy day!
Here will I sit and while away
The sober morn in this warm nook,
And browse through some delightful book.

While steadily above my roof
The wind drives by in clashing proof,
And shakes from off the dripping leaves
Their chilly burdens round the eaves,

I'll sit and hear the rhythmic beat,
Hour after hour like tiny feet,
Of rain-drops slanting from a sky
O'er which low clouds troop ceaselessly.

My happy calm none shall invade;
Light Fancy now, all unafraid,
Shall weave her charm; her airy spell
Through these still hours shall prosper well.

While o'er their drenched and shifting beds
The flowers droop their heavy heads,
And while behind their rain-plashed screen
The birds their ruffled plumage preen,

I sit in pleasant revery
Where books, like friends, smile down on me,
And round me floats a perfume rare
From fairy censers swung in air.

O blessèd, blessèd rainy day!
In yon dim west die not away.
My dreamful spirit fain would keep
Such simple pleasures, pure and deep.

DAWN.

THE dews are sifted o'er the lawn,
Pale vapors fold the shadowy height,
And like a ghost the pallid dawn
Steals down the aisles of night.

Heaven's myriad torches quench their fires,
And yonder, o'er the earth's faint rim,
Where in the mist the moon expires,
The morning star grows dim.

The soft sleep-angel's dusky plumes
Glimmer along the silent way;
She takes to lands of dreamful glooms,
Far from the garish day.

The hill-tops flush—the night is done;
A sudden bird-note, sweet and strong,
Rings out, till lo! beneath the sun
The world is drenched with song.

DUSK.

THE silver dew lies on the grass,
Above the hills the pale moon climbs,
And where my eager footsteps pass
The crickets cease their chimes.

I breathe a fine, faint scent of musk,
And, while the shadows slowly fall,
A little beck sobs through the dusk,
And flitting night-birds call.

There flickering through the fragrant dark,
In many a changeful, dizzy maze,
I see the firefly's sudden spark
Shine down the misty ways.

And this is night. O, may my eyes,
When freed from all life's wildering spells,
Behold the heavenly dew that lies
On meads of asphodels.

A SUMMER DAY.

THE sunshine lies athwart yon emerald bosk,
Where blithesome runnels dance from out the
dusk
Of greenery spired like an eastern mosque,
And o'er the fields the winds steal, faint with
musk.

The sun, midway upon his tireless march,
Eyes languidly the green earth's sleepy face,
But the fond sky, with arms in dreamy arch,
Stoops down to take her in its soft embrace.

Lo! lying yonder in an azure swoon,
Where earth and sky in misty outlines merge,
I see the narrow, curved, white summer moon,
Pale and uncertain, o'er yon western verge.

Dim is the circuit of the far-off hills,
From whose light crests the thin, blue forests
fail
In distance, and beyond the sunlight fills
The white-winged clouds that o'er the heavens
sail.

The yearning willow bends each leafy spray,
And softly dips it in the sliding wave,

And on yon pebbly marge, across the way,
Two little wrens their soft brown pinions lave.

A slumberous silence steeps the summer noon,
Save the cicada's piping, shrill and long,
And now and then a hautboy's drowsy tune,
In fitful snatches of an old love-song.

O day of dreams, thou art not wholly lost;
When winter winds shall wax through sleety
rain,
And all the flowers lie dead beneath the frost,
In memory I shall live thee o'er again.

CHANGE.

AH, yes! 'Twas when the surly winds were chiding,
And all the world was white with winter's death,
I heard thee sing how in thy heart was hiding
The spring's warm breath.

Now summer skies are bending lightly over
The dappled meadows and the fragrant wold,
And lo! where bees drone in the fresh young clover,
Thy heart lies cold.

THE SWEET-PEA.

A SLENDER pink-faced village lass,
'Round whom the light winds, as they pass,
Linger caressingly, if so
To win a favor ere they go.
A fluttering ribbon clasps her waist;
About her forehead, calm and chaste,
Bright ringlets blow; her dove-like eyes
Are pure and deep as summer skies.
She is a sunny, fragile thing,
And you may see her blossoming
Adown some mossy garden way,
Fresh as the dew, and fair as day.
What though old-fashioned she may be?
True hearts still love the shy sweet-pea.

TIGER-LILY.

WHAT torrid days have poured their quivering heat
 Into the hollow of thy slender urn,
Till now within thy heart, once chastely sweet,
 The fires of tropic heavens ever burn!

Or pale, perchance, as virgin peaks of snow,
 Thou stood'st in stainless splendor, till one day
A wounded tiger at thy feet crouched low,
 And o'er thy chalice plashed his blood's red
 spray.

A PERFECT DAY.

How beautiful the summer morn,
With billowy leagues of wheat and corn!
The shining woods and fields rejoice;
Each twinkling stream lifts up its voice
To join the chorus of the sky;
O beautiful unspeakably!
In the dry cicada's notes,
In the thistle-down that floats
Aimless on the shimmering air,
In the perfume sweet and rare
Of the sun-steeped, dark-leaved trees,
Dwell the year's deep prophecies.
Hark! the clangor of the mills
Echoes from the drowsy hills.
The foamy clouds, the smiling dale,
The dimpling waves, the laughing flowers,
The low, faint droning of the bees,
Mixed with sweet twitterings from the leas,
Conspire to charm the magic hours.
Under a spell the spirit lies;
Sundered is sorrow's misty veil;
To-day life is a glad surprise,
A tranquil rapture, fine and frail,
Wherein to joy-anointed eyes
The old earth seems a Paradise.

SUNRISE.

THERE are pearls in the heart of the rose,
There are gems on each grassy spire,
And the eye of the hidden violet glows
With a tender and tremulous fire;
For over the valley's emerald brim
The dawn's pale light is spilled,
And the heart of the woodlands, misty-dim,
With the flutter of wings is thrilled.

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And hark! welling up from the ground
An elfin music is heard,
And out of the copses floats a sound
Of many a wakening bird.
Now over the wide and darkling sea
Hastens the sun-crowned morn;
There's a flush on the height, there's a light on the
lea;
Behold! the day is born.

MORNING.

THE mist-born shapes of dawn about them wrap
Their great gray cloaks and silently depart.
The dew-drops, one by one, slip off the spray,
As from the fullness of his mighty heart
The sun doth kiss earth's glittering tears away,
And, smiling, fling bright jewels in her lap.
Across the fields the chore-boy's merry call
Comes ringing, and the milkmaid's early song,
Mixed with the lowing of the distant kine.
The morning-glories on the mouldered wall
Are open, bathing in the golden shine,
And turning from light Zephyr's amorous arms,
Bare all their bosoms to the roving bee.
The meadow brooks bound cheerily along
And kiss the timid flowers as they flee,
Leaving them weeping at a trust betrayed.
Pale, sad-eyed Phosphor in the east hath died;
Dimmed by sweet morning's fuller, fairer charms,
Hath drooped and faded like a love-sick maid.
Along the river-shallows herons wade,
And on the wave the water-lilies ride,
And by the shore the silent plover steals,
Or thither comes a thirsty wren to drink.
Ah me, how glad the morn! The breath of day
Brings to the wakened world its healing balm,
And softly breathes the fevered sleep away

From some wan sufferer's dim and hollow eyes.
Up from the village mellow murmurs rise,
And from yon hillside, where the white flocks stray,
A single distant bell, now faint, now clear,
Blends its sweet cadence with the morning calm.
Life bubbles up and overflows its brink;
In every heart hope sings, and love is dear
Where'er o'er earth the morning angel flies.

NIGHTFALL.

DESCEND, O dewy twilight, o'er the hills,
With kisses soft and cool; the whip-poor-wills,
Deep-buried in the bosom of the vale,
Wait for thy coming, and the young moon, pale
And dimly crescent, o'er the vapory height
Climbs slowly up, wreathed in her own faint light.
The voices of the day are quenched in sleep;
Along the dusky slopes the peaceful sheep
Feed 'mid the shadows, and anon is heard,
Waking to sweet complaint some drowsy bird,
The mellow tinkling of the leader's bell.
Upon the gloom now softly sink and swell
The cricket's slender vespers, and afar,
As if to mock eve's solitary star,
Or echo back the watch-dog's distant howl,
From yon lone wood the hooting of the owl
Deepens the hush and loneliness of night.
Upon the lawn, the roses, red and white,
Sift their light petals o'er the beaded grass,
And on the poppiéd breezes, as they pass,
Breathe out the musky secrets of their hearts.
Now on his quest the wheeling bat departs
With beating wings, and countless beetles boom
Headlong across the fields. The purple gloom
Thickens upon the landscape; in the skies
The tardy stars come out, and murmurs rise

From streams that through the curtained darkness
 flow,
Fretting among their pebbles as they go.
In the still orchards, and the meadows damp,
The fitful firefly kindles his small lamp,
While o'er the marish comes the ceaseless sound
Of piping voices. From the dew-drenched ground
A subtle incense rises, and the air
Is laden with a perfume keen and rare.
Low in the west the embers of the day
Die darkly down; a mist hangs, chill and gray,
Above the silent river's sleepy tide,
Whereon the folded water-lilies ride,
And the tall flags, stirred by the curling waves,
Whisper together. Where the current laves
The trailing branches of yon rustling tree,
Floats a thin sound of airy revelry,
And in a dizzy maze the singing gnats
Dance slowly off across the reedy flats.
How beautiful is the dark! the gradual calm
Steals into all the blood, and like a balm
The crystal drops of night wide o'er the land
Are scattered, as by some invisible hand.
Welcome, O dark! Tired heart, thou too art blest;
After the weary day, night brings thee rest;
After the wildering tumult, strife, and heat,
The coolness comes, and silence soft and sweet.

WHEN THE DAY DECLINES.

WHEN the day declines,
And the night is near—
When the low sun shines
On the landscape sere—
Then, while shadows creep
Over vale and height,
Lo! beyond the deep
A single star grows bright.

When my life declines,
And the night is near—
When the low sun shines
On a way of fear—
Then, while shadows creep
O'er my glimmering sight,
Lo! beyond the deep
May a star grow bright.

EVENSONG.

OVER the old, tired world the soothing night
Sinks softly down; still faintly glows the west;
The eager birds now cease their joyous flight,
And seek the loving shelter of the nest.
O heart, fret not; pause in the fading light;
This evening-time thou too shalt have thy rest.

Fieldward the cattle thrud their dewy way;
The evening star hangs in the quiet sky;
Athwart the leas the shadows long and gray
Stretch out like arms, and prone and darkling lie
Upon the unresting brooks; gone is the day;
O restless heart, thine evening, too, draws nigh!

EVENING AT CAPE ANN.

HUGE rocks, hurled upward by the angry sea,
Like Titan warriors slain in some fierce fray,
Lie scattered yonder where the billows gray
Leap up and smite each other wrathfully.

Athwart the wet, wide sands the long waves flow,
Tossing and tumbling in tumultuous flight;
And far away, through gloom of gathering night,
The shadowy ships on into darkness go.

Hark! o'er the troubled ocean's ceaseless roar,
The lonely crying of the whip-poor-will
Sounds mournfully along the wooded hill
That lifts its solemn brow above the shore.

Night reigns upon the sea and on the land,
Supreme, save where yon beacon shines afar,
As though, ere its last plunge, a falling star
Had been arrested by some mighty hand,

And there forever o'er the restless deep
Poised as a shining hope, while to and fro
The home-bound vessels through the darkness go,
With precious freight for those who watch and weep.

Ah me! one eventide, across the main
Some silent ship shall come, I know not whence,
From these dim shores of life to bear me hence,
And never more to landward fare again.

Well, be it so; let evening take its flight;
To sail that sea I will not hesitate,
Nor question if the time be soon or late,
If so God's beacon shines across the night.

IDLE DAYS.

O SWEET do-nothing days! I lie
Beneath a cloud-filmed summer sky,
And while the hammock idly swings,
I hear the oriole as he sings,
Perched somewhere 'mid the glossy leaves
That yonder maple round him weaves.
I know that soon the thin blue sleet
Against the frosty panes will beat,
And all the knotted limbs will clash
As charging storm-winds through them crash;
Yet I shall sit where flames upleap
From ruddy coals, nor wake nor sleep,
But dream of long, sunshiny hours,
When unreaped fields were flushed with flowers,
When every copse and tangled close
Was sweet with balm of mint and rose,
And some full-throated song's outrush
Swift shattered all the noontide hush.
So still within my heart shall be
The summer's light and melody,
The shy, soft winds that ever shift,
And drowsy clouds that slowly drift,
Though at my door grim Winter stand,
And loudly knock with mailed hand.

SEED-TIME.

THE fields lie swathed in misty blue;
Dim vapors crown the wooded height;
From every trembling spray the dew
Shoots back the morning's quivering light.
In hollows where the tender fern
Uncurls beside the glimmering burn,
The cool gray shadows linger yet,
To kiss the pale young violet.
Hark! singing through the orchard close,
And whistling o'er the furrowed plain,
The lusty sower blithely goes
To drop the golden grain.

Clear morning sounds are in the air;
The birds their jocund matins swell;
Each stream makes music fine and rare;
Each fountain rings its crystal bell.
Sweet from the blooming apple-trees,
Come elfin quirings of the bees,
And from far uplands, faintly borne,
Float mellow greetings to the morn.
O tuneful world! each wind that blows
Brings from the field a glad refrain,
Where, singing still, the sower goes
And drops his golden grain.

HARVEST.

THE hills are steeped in slumberous haze;
 The wind is breathing soft and low;
 On tranquil slopes the cattle graze;
 Through twinkling light the waters flow.
 About the meadows, smoothly shorn,
 The cricket winds his cheery horn,
 And o'er the calm expanse of sky
 The filmy clouds drift lazily.
 Across the smiling valley—hark!
 How steals the echo, sweet and long,
 Of those who sing from morn till dark
 The happy harvest song.

The mossy barns, with heapèd floors,
 Amid the peaceful landscape lie;
 The doves wheel through the open doors;
 About the eaves the swallows fly.
 Now slowly rolls the creaking wain
 Up from the yellow fields of grain,
 Where swart-armed reapers gayly sing,
 And sturdy sickles glance and ring.
 O liberal earth! O fruitful days!
 Each wind that stirs the rustling leaves
 Bears round the world the grateful praise
 Of those who bind the sheaves.

AN AUTUMN MORNING.

I.

Now o'er yon hill the glad Aurora comes,
Blushing from rosy cheeks to finger tips,
And o'er the meadow, through the mist she slips
Into the forest where the partridge drums.
The humble bee above the holly hums;
The willow in the river softly dips;
Across the field the merry milkmaid trips,
And on her shining pail she gently thrums
An old love-ditty, wondering the while
If Robin Gray will meet her at the stile.
The lowing cattle o'er the sweet, late grass,
With rattling hoofs press onward to the rill,
Brushing the glittering dewdrops as they pass,
Till at the bubbling stream they drink their fill.

II.

Scarcely a bird-song in the sunlit air,
Save now and then a mournful chickadee,
Weeping its heart away in melody,
Cries out the burden that it cannot bear.
The forest trees upon the upland wear
A gayer livery, and the eye can see,
As higher up the sun climbs lazily,
The shocks of corn stacked on the hillside fair.

The creaking wain rolls slowly toward the field,
Where tawny pumpkins doze beneath the sun;
Beyond, the patient cattle, one by one,
Stand waiting still their treasured sweets to yield,
Looking with wondering eyes; the maid the while
Kisses her Robin by the meadow stile.

AN AUTUMN BALLAD.

PERHAPS I loved him better than the others—who
shall tell?

But he was always a good boy and made me love
him well;

He was not like my Robert, nor was he like my
Will,

His ways were always different—so steady, true,
and still.

I mind me how he left me on that shining autumn
day;

The corn was shocked upon the hill, where the
yellow pumpkins lay;

The apples fell from loaded boughs, the fields were
green and fair,

And plenty, peace, and happiness breathed in
the earth and air.

He stood against the mellow light within the open
door;

His shadow wavered through my tears along the
sunny floor,

To where I sat and sobbed, as if my lonely heart
would break,

For he was last to leave me—he had waited for my
sake.

His eyes were dim and tearful, and his voice was
broken, slow;

"It is my duty, mother," he said, "that I should
go;

The government has need of men; I go to fill my
place;

'Tis better I should go to death than stay and win
disgrace."

He turned and left me, for he could not speak an-
other word,

But as he passed the garden gate a stifled sob I
heard.

In strange bewilderment I rose and looked upon
the day;

There in the sunlight danced the rill by which he
used to play.

I heard the sound of marching feet, I heard the
bugle blow;

And through my open door I saw the soldiers come
and go;

A face I knew, a face I loved, flashed by me, still
and white,

And passed, though then I knew it not, forever
from my sight.

What need to tell the weary while of anxious nights
and days

That followed? On the peaceful hills I saw the
cattle graze;

The misty sunshine, warm and soft, lay on the
golden leaf,
But not on that dark heart of mine, so bowed and
full of grief.

It came full soon, the cruel blow, ere scarce a
month was gone,
And he, my boy, my best beloved, whom I had
leaned upon,
Forth from the carnage and the strife, the murder-
ous blare and heat,
Was brought, the war's first offering, and laid
before my feet.

I could not look on his dead face, I could not moan
nor weep,
When, wrapped within his country's flag, they bore
him to his sleep;
There, day and night, beside his grave goes rip-
pling down the rill,
And there the last late sunbeam lingers on the
pleasant hill.

My Robert and my Will came back; they are good
boys to me,
But somehow in my life there is a dreary vacancy;
I miss his step, I miss his voice, his quiet ways I
miss,
And daily on my lips it seems I yet must feel his
kiss.

The seasons go their wonted round; through all
the autumn days,
The dreamy earth lies lightly swathed within an
amber haze;
But never come such days to me as when, in that
old year,
The world was beautiful to me because my boy was
here.

Perhaps I loved him better than the others—who
shall tell?
But he was always a good boy and made me love
him well;
And since I know that he has gone to come again
no more,
It seems that he is nearer far, and dearer than
before.

THE WANING YEAR.

By this we know the year is growing old:
The mists droop from the hills in many a fold;
In mournful monotone the crickets sing;
The fitful winds vague premonitions bring.
Across the tideless azure of the skies
Less lightly sail the cloudy argosies.
The golden-rods, beside the plaintive stream,
All day within the pallid sunshine dream
Of brighter hours, when through the drowsy noon
The whetted scythe rang out its merry tune.
The hoarse cicada's strident note is heard
Amid the stubble, and a lonely bird,
Behind its fluttering screen of russet leaves,
Lifts up its solitary voice and grieves.
The year is not the same; the waning days
Are filled with sad desires, and o'er the ways
Where once love's happy feet were fondly set,
There broods a strange and shadowy regret.
Old memories waken; from the restless heart
Rise nameless longings, and the swift tears start
Unbidden for the joys that now lie dead
As yonder rose whose bloom long since was shed.

A HINT OF WINTER.

Now in the wood the partridge drums;
Across the stubbly ground
The wary hunter lightly comes
And scarcely wakes a sound.

The forests flame along the hill,
And from the rustling trees
The leaves drift down and choke the rill,
Or frolic in the breeze.

The sumacs kindle by the streams;
Beneath the chilly noon
One joyless blossom stands and dreams
Of days that passed too soon.

A whisper stirs the naked hedge,
And o'er the faded fields,
Around the pool, amid the sedge,
A hint of winter steals.

SONG OF THE NORTH WIND.

HARK to the voice of me!
Hear thou the singing
Of him who has never
Been paid for his song!
This is the choice of me,
Still to go ringing
The rhymes that forever
Are surly and strong.

Know'st thou the regions cold
Whence I have hasted?
Know'st thou the way I take
Over the earth?
Still stand the legions old—
Ice-kings unwasted—
Fending the frigid lake
Where I had birth.

Frost-banded fountains
Snow-fed from far peaks;
Firths of the polar sea
Rigid as stone;
Shag-bearded mountains;
Deeps that no star seeks;
Strange lights that solar be—
These I have known.

Men fear the breath of me;
Sorrow and anguish,
Famine and fever
Follow my path.
I am the death of thee;
I make thee languish;
Swiftly I sever
Love's ties in my wrath.

Chains can not hold me,
Gyves can not bind me,
Bolts can not lock me,
Floods can not drown!
Fly—and I fold thee;
Hide—and I find thee;
Cry—and I mock thee,
Howling thee down.

BEFORE AND AFTER.

OLD Janus of the double face
Looks both before and after;
His eyes one moment brim with tears,
The next o'erflow with laughter.

He sees the griefs of yesterday,
And turning toward the morrow,
He sees the joys that lie in wait
For hearts bowed down with sorrow.

He sees the homes that love had left,
When evil entered darkling,
Grow bright again with happy smiles
And eyes of children sparkling.

He sees the graves, that once were made
When snow and sleet were falling,
Grow green and fair with grass and flowers,
And birds above them calling.

He sees the torn and trampled fields,
Where War his red brand raises,
O'erspread at length with leagues of grain
And fringed with star-eyed daisies.

He sees the shattered plans of men,
And lives that shame has blighted,
And ties of love that sundered lie,
All healed and reunited.

He sees old habits' chains thrown off,
Strong fetter snapped from fetter,
And marks, as rolling months go by,
The glad world growing better.

Thus Janus of the double face,
Whose locks with frost are hoary,
Sees streaming from the darkened past
The future's golden glory.

LAUS MORTIS.

EUTHANASIA.

HEARKEN, yea hearken, O Death!
Sweet Death, thou shadowy nurse,
With touches soft and cool;
Thou art the lover and healer,
The watcher thou and the soother
Of all who suffer and weep.
The bosom of thee is a refuge,
A hiding-place and a fortress
From tempest, from woe and misfortune.
The face of thee is not evil
To him who beholds thee and knows thee
Gentle and pitiful ever.
O gracious and grateful thy presence!
Thine eyes are filled with compassion,
And thy countenance, tender and mild,
Bringeth peace to disquieted spirits.
Forth through the aisles of the woodlands,
Through orchards where blossoms have sifted
Their petals o'er green springing grasses,
'Mid fields where the singing of birds
And the breathing wind and the sunshine
Are fraught with the promise of spring,
Thou passest and touchest the bud,
The blossom, the breast of the singer,
And straightway they leave us, enchanted,
Loving thee more than the world.

The fragrance, the light, and the longing,
The glory, the grace, and the gladness,
The marvel, the mystery of all
That we love or hold dear on the earth,
Are forsaken, outrivaled, forgotten,
When thou dost beckon away.
Laughter and singing,
Sobbing and crying,
Seeking and losing,
Sleeping and waking,
Forever and ever
In Death's house surcease.
Restful thy silence
After the tumult,
Strife and confusion
Born of the earth.
Lay thy palm, cool and moist, on our foreheads,
Till the fever, the aching and throbbing,
And the phantoms brought forth of disease
Shall vanish forever away.
We praise thee, O Death, our physician!
We love thee, O Death, for thy balm!
We trust thee, companion and friend,
For thou wilt not, thou canst not betray,
Since thou art God's servant to men.

A BALLAD OF DEATH.

I HUG thy face to mine,
I feel thy breath;
What breath so shrewd as thine,
So sweet, O Death?

Give me thy lips to kiss;
Like sharp old wine
They thrill and sting with bliss—
Those lips of thine.

Against thy heart I press,
O Death, my lover;
My utter nakedness
Thy cloak shall cover—

Thy cool, thick cloak of grass
And woven flowers,
Through which no heat can pass,
Nor frost nor showers.

No warmth is in thy breast,
Nor is it colder
Than lends a pleasant rest
To them that molder.

My heart from thy true heart
Time shall not sunder;
We shall not lie apart,
The dark sod under;

But lie in cloven clay,
And clasp and kiss,
Nor miss the light of day,
Nor starlight miss.

My mouth shall cleave to thine,
My arms shall hold thee;
Thy soul shall mix with mine,
Thy peace enfold me.

I grasp thy bony wrist,
Nor fear nor falter;
Thy love shall still exist
(Nor ever alter)

When earthly love hath fled
And left no traces;
Thy tears are never shed
On faded faces.

Than love of earthly friends,
What love is blinder?
Earth's love with hatred blends;
Thy love is kinder.

Thy love shall still exist,
Despite derision;
No dim deceitful mist
E'er clouds thy vision,

But thou dost see aright;
Thy love hath power
To purge thine inward sight,
From hour to hour.

Lean over; let me touch
Thy wan white face;
Thou hast such beauty, such
High, godlike grace.

Mine eyes thy kisses seal,
And on me pressing,
Thy thin moist palms I feel,
In mute caressing.

O Death, I love thee, thou
So gracious art;
I lay my throbbing brow
On thy cool heart,

And sink beneath a flood
Of blissful feeling,
While into all my blood
Thy calm is stealing.

Who grieves to leave an earth
Of tears and sighs,
Of moans and hollow mirth,
Of spite and lies?

Not I. Make room for me;
My face is numb;
Henceforth with kissing thee
My lips are dumb.

THE AVANT-COURIER.

Ho, death's outrider! dost thou wait
Before my castle's ancient gate,
And bid me, with imperious knock,
Straightway the stubborn valves unlock?
I know thy voice, thy grim disguise,
The fever burning in thine eyes,
Thine eager haste that none can stay,
Thy summons brooking no delay.
And wherefore art thou come so soon?
The hour scarce marks mid-afternoon
Upon the dial, and the sun
Gives yet no hint that day is done;
Not yet along my ways are shed
Life's clustered roses, white and red—
Still round the beaker's honeyed brim
Joy's rainbow bubbles lightly swim.
And whence, O Courier, hast thou fared,
To bid a chamber be prepared
For that weird guest, whose coming long
I hoped to ward with wine and song?
Go by, go by a little space;
I prithee, grant me of thy grace
A little longer season yet
My house in order fair to set,
And fitly welcome, as seems best,
So rare and so august a guest.

Thou wilt not pass? I must descend
To open unto thee, my friend?
Be not impatient—hold thy hand,
I come to do thy stern command.
Lo! thus the portals wide I fling;
I know the message thou dost bring,
What urgent need hath spurred thy flight—
My soul shall be required this night.

PAX MORTIS.

THE lady lies clothed all in white;
Her yellow ringlets fall
Like throbbing rays of amber light
Along the sombre pall.

Her shapely limbs, like marble cold,
Gleam through the drapery
That clasps her form in many a fold,
To veil her chastity.

Her lips, pale blighted buds of May,
Shall bloom no more, and lo!
How swiftly shall dissolve away
Her bosom's drifted snow.

The light hath left her sweet blue eyes;
The silver voice is mute,—
Its music fled, and now she lies
Dumb as a shattered lute.

Her hands are crossed upon her breast;
O, is this death or sleep?
And does she only take her rest,
While stars their vigils keep?

The lights burn softly in their place;
A perfume fills the air;
The silence lies upon her face,
And on her yellow hair.

Her two white feet are still and cold;
Her two cold cheeks are white;
But lying under warm soft mold,
She'll feel no chill of night.

The wingèd moments come and go;
The lady doth not reckon;
A single rose, as white as snow,
Lies on her sweet white neck.

The silent stars wheel over her;
The watchers watch in vain;
Though dawn shall come she will not stir,
Nor wake nor weep again.

NOVA VITA.

"That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die."

I COR. XV. 36.

O DAINTY babe, thou wast too fair to die!
What couldst thou have to do with writhing worms,
With dank, dull clods, and the grave's mystery?
What dim affinity with these blind germs,
Which nature, when the time is ripe, shall change
To waving corn, didst thou possess? O strange
And dark to mortal vision are the ways
Of Infinite Wisdom. Need'st thou, too, descend
Into the earth's cold bosom with the maize,
That fostering nature unto thee may lend
Her subtlest powers of light and warmth and dew,
To make thee blossom into life anew?
What sweeter charms, what graces rich and rare,
Unknown to human love, shalt thou assume?
O, than thou wast can there be aught more fair?
Thy face was like a flower in its bloom,
Delicate, pure and joyous, and thine eyes
Deeper and bluer than yon deep blue skies.
Lo! I must fare along the weary years,
Lonely and hopeless, seeing through my tears
Only a low green mound of summer grass,
Where once I hid thee in the peaceful keep
Of Night and Silence, who shall rock thy deep
Cool cradle, till I too one day shall pass
Death's border unawares, and fall on sleep?

THE WANDERER.

HAVE you seen our little one ?

Yesterday

In our midst she sweetly shone,
Radiant, star-like; there were none
But did love her; ah, they say
That we've lost her—that she's gone
Far away.

You would know her on the street;

Shining hair,

Eyes of blue, and dainty feet—
You would know her should you meet
Our lost darling anywhere;
God's own saints are not more sweet,
Nor more fair.

We have sought her to and fro,

But in vain;

Ah! if she could only know
How our hearts with tears o'erflow,
She would come to us again;
She would take away our woe,
Heal our pain!

Shall we ever see her more ? —

Shining head,

Laughing lips and eyes of yore?
Shall we have her as before,—
Our lost bird that lightly spread
The swift, viewless wings she wore,
And so fled?

Ay, we shall not lose her quite;
By and by,
When our eyes have better sight,
Growing used to larger light,
Her fair path we shall descry.
God will guide our feet aright,
Graciously.

We shall find her some rare day,
Soon or late;
We shall find her at her play,
Blithe as when she fled away;
So we will not wail our fate;
Though our heads and hearts be gray,
We can wait.

UNCHANGEABLE.

BEHOLD the light upon the purple hill;
Behold the undimmed glory of the sky;
Look! as of old there singing goes the rill—
Love, all things do not die.

There gleams as bright an emerald in the grass
As in those years when you and I were young;
The restless birds that ever come and pass,
Sing with as sweet a tongue.

The flowers that spring on yonder sunny slope
Are just as fair as flowers used to be;
The world hath changed not! we have lost our hope,
And we have changed, Love, we.

Have lost our hope? nay, Love, our hope is found;
Secure from change, secure from tempests wild,
Forevermore our own, beneath the ground,
O Love, we keep our child.

A NOVEMBER GRAVE.

THE gray clouds gather, fold on fold,
Above the blurred and dripping wold;
The light is growing pale and cold,
 And ghostly mists steal o'er the plain.
A robin in the elm is crying;
About the eaves the wind is sighing;
O dismal day! my heart is lying
 In yon fresh grave drenched with the rain.

RONDEAU.

WHEN I am dead, and all life's griefs at last
Forever and forevermore are past,
Though still the green earth wheels its ceaseless
 round,
While I sleep sweetly in the cool, sweet ground,
I shall not reck if time move slow or fast.

But, O my Love, the deathless love thou hast
Shall move like light above me in the vast
Dim void of death, where breaks nor light nor
 sound—

When I am dead.

I shall not reck though darkness overcast
The summer sky, or the wild, winter blast
Vex the heaped snows above my lowly mound,
For I shall lie in silence softly wound,
Soothed by the memory of what thou wast—
 When I am dead.

WHEN CLOVER BLOOMS.

WHEN clover blooms in the meadows,
And the happy south winds blow;
When under the leafy shadows
The singing waters flow—
Then come to me; as you pass
I shall hear your feet in the grass,
And my heart shall awake and leap
From its cool, dark couch of sleep,
And shall thrill again, as of old,
Ere its long rest under the mold—
When clover blooms.

Deem not that I shall not waken;
I shall know, my Love, it is you;
I shall feel the tall grass shaken,
I shall hear the drops of the dew
That scatter before your feet;
I shall smell the perfume sweet
Of the red rose that you wear,
As of old in your sunny hair;
Deem not that I shall not know
It is your light feet that go
'Mid clover blooms.

O Love, the years have parted—
The long, long years!—our ways;

You have gone with the merry-hearted
These many and many days,
And I with that grim guest
Who loveth the silence best.
But come to me—I shall wait
For your coming, soon or late,
For soon or late, I know,
You shall come to my rest below
The clover blooms.

TREAD LIGHTLY.

TREAD lightly, Love, lest thou shouldst break my
sleep;

Tread lightly o'er the turf above my head;
I would my slumber should be still and deep,
While nature drapes her greenery round my bed.

Come not too often, lest thou vex my rest;
The grass-blades crinkling 'neath thy passing feet
Would wake an echo in my hollow breast,
And somewhere in the dust my heart would beat.

The nesting birds shall warble over me,
And in the clover, o'er my placid face,
Through long bright afternoons the reveling bee
Shall sound his pipe about the quiet place.

I'll follow some sweet dream through many a maze,
While suns and seasons o'er me slowly glide;
And when at length thou leav'st the world's fair
ways,
I'll wake and softly fold thee to my side.

REQUIESCAT.

SHE sleeps, and may her peaceful rest
Unbroken be;
The flowers that nod above her breast
She can not see;
To warbling bird, to purling brook,
Deaf are her ears;
Sealed is the volume of the book
Of her brief years.
So let her rest; she will not heed
The tales they tell;
She recks not now of word or deed—
She slumbers well.

FINIS.

Now his long day's work is done,
Fold his palms upon his breast;
Sweet the sleep which he hath won—
Come away and let him rest.

He hath toiled amid the tares;
He hath given of his best;
Now he hath surcease from cares—
Come away and let him rest.

Scant his wage through weary years;
He hath broke the crust unblest;
Quaffed the cup of bitter tears;
But at last God gives him rest.

OUT OF THE SHADOWS.

A SONG

WITH VARIATIONS.

DEDICATION.

*O THOU who, in the sacred name of wife,
Shalt garner good from all the years to be—
Twin of my heart, O thou who unto me
Shalt yield the perfect flower of thy life—
Take these poor songs, faint echoes of past years,
Sung in the ample light of this rich morn,
Where Hope keeps watch beside her latest born,
And Memory sits smiling through her tears.*

OUT OF THE SHADOWS.

PART I.—EVENING.

I.

AMO.

I do not know that I could love her more;
I know that I could never love her less,
For none have ever felt her loveliness
Strike on their lives but that they did adore.
Where'er she goes there goes a light before,
And music in the motion of her dress;
And in her voice is such rich tenderness,
That eyes unused to weeping must run o'er
With blissful tears to hear her when she sings.
Nor do I marvel much her harp doth sigh
With inward pain when she doth touch the strings,
For that it cannot weep, but only cry
Melodiously the rapture that she brings.
To free her lot from sorrow, I would die!

II.

LOVE'S VAGARIES.

I often wonder, should I touch her hand,
If it would be like others I might clasp;
Or if it would not fall from out my grasp,
Unfelt and gradually as trickling sand:

Or if it would not burn me like a brand,
Or sharply sting as if I held an asp;
Or if I should not lose my breath and gasp,
That in her presence I should dare to stand.
But O, she seemeth me so far beyond,
That I dare never breathe her dear name, save
In holy sleep and dreams divinely fond,
Which to recall awake seems madly brave.
Alas! I feel indeed that I am bond
To her forever—though a willing slave.

III.

A PORTRAITURE.

I.

She's very fair, and in her eyes
Her gentle spirit lies asleep,
Still as a star in evening skies
Mirrored by an untroubled deep.

II.

The ruddy ripeness of her lip,
The rounded beauty of her cheek,
Mark her, of all, Eve's fairest slip,
The queenliest, yet most proudly meek.

III.

I know she hath the stateliest form
That e'er was clothed with maiden grace,
And ne'er was neck more white and warm,
And ne'er was a more perfect face.

IV.

To type her brow, of saintliest white,
There's not a flower howso rare,
And all the glories of the night
Meet in the rich hue of her hair.

V.

She wills to be not wholly known;
For, ever drawn into her rest,
With livelier tint and lovelier tone,
One knows not when she pleaseth best.

VI.

Her ways are winning, yet I think
She hath than all a nobler art—
Those virtues, sweeter far, that link
The angel to the woman's heart.

VII.

And thus I find her truer worth
In that which good alone hath given;
A tender being of the earth,
But breathing the fine air of heaven.

IV.

REMBRANDTESQUE.

A purple passion-flower at her feet,
And on her bosom a white lily lies;
And in the shadowy depth of her soft eyes
Her placid spirit lieth fair and sweet.

The shifting hues that o'er her features fleet
Are radiant of love's impassioned dyes,
And where the curves of shining shoulders rise
Her glossy locks in tangled ringlets meet.
Her faultless lips are parted in a song,
The words whereof are hard to understand
As a dead language or an unknown tongue,
And yet I know it must be something grand.
But if I say not this, I do her wrong:
She is the loveliest lady in the land.

V.

ON GUARD.

I.

She's sweet and fair, but is not true,
And that, you know, is cause to rue,
For who would woo a fickle maid—
Would you?

II.

She has bright eyes, but they deceive;
That too, you know, is cause to grieve,
For so in her none ever can
Believe.

III.

Her lips are very ripe and red,
And lips are sweet, you know, *'tis said*;
But I would rather have her heart
Instead.

IV.

Or rather I would have them both,
For with the lips, you know, the troth
Is plighted, when the true heart is
Not loth.

V.

Fie! I'll not fall into the net;
She's nothing but a slight coquette,
And such, you know, 'twere better to
Forget.

VI.

MY LOVE IS LIKE THE VASTNESS OF THE SEA.

My love is like the vastness of the sea,
As deep as life, as high as heaven is high,
And pure as an unclouded summer sky,
And as enduring as eternity.

My love is that which was, and is to be,
Which knows no change, and which can never
die;

Which all the wealth of Ophir could not buy,
Yet free to *one* as light and air are free.

O Love, thou putt'st to shame the nightingale;
Thy lips, like bees, are fraught with hydromel;
Than lilies be, thy bosom is more pale;
Thy words are sweeter than a silver bell:
Yet time from thee thy beauties shall estrange,
But this my love can never suffer change.

VII.

FLOWER AND THORN.

Like some rare flower of perfume divine
That bloomed beneath a garden hedge unseen,
Till favored hands by chance thrust back the
screen,
And happy eyes saw its proud beauty shine;
So did I find thee, O thou Love of mine!
The fairest maid that ever walked the green
Glad earth, and regal as a Roman queen,
And lovely as a rose incarnadine.
O Love, I found thee, and my heart was glad
Of summer-tide; but I forgot—ah, vain!—
That brightest blooms with sharpest thorns are
clad.
I cried, “O beautiful!” and sought to gain
Thee from thy solitude, when o’er my mad,
Wild ardor I felt love’s most cruel pain!

VIII.

THE STATUE.

I.

I know not if it be the odorous air,
Or yonder royal lily’s stately height,
Or if it be the tinkling fountain bright
In the midsummer moonlight sleeping there;
I know not, Love, if these have any share
In turning all my thoughts to thee to-night.

II.

There in the dusk stands pale Mnemosyne,
One hand upon her brow, one on her heart
Pressed hard, as though she felt the cruel smart
Of some old wound afresh in memory:
Ah! now I know, Love, why I thought of thee;
Wan Memory feeleth how unkind thou art.

IX.

SIGN AND SYMBOL.

Love, love, love!
The mystic voice of earth;
The song whose sudden changes move
From sorrow unto mirth.
Mark the symbol, mark the sign,
Beauty vain and youth divine:
A wingèd dart,
A bleeding heart—
Mortal hurts may never heal.
Vows forgotten, vows unspoken,
Broken bowl and pitcher broken,
Loosened cord and shattered wheel!
Love, love, O love!
The rapture and the wonder!
Evening star and morning bird,
Distant echo, dying word,
Stifled voice and song unheard,
And lute-string snapt asunder!

X.

A FANTASY.

I.

A passion-flower, a lily, and a dove;
A weary waste, heart hunger, and a thorn;
There, in the sunlight, far away, my Love
Beside the sea sits singing to the morn;
Here, in a lonely shadow-land, I move—
A silent shadow—hopeless and forlorn.

II.

O voice of song! O song amid the flowers!
O wanderer fainting 'mid the thorns and sand!
Through all the long, glad light of summer hours,
O Love, thou sittest singing on the strand;
See, in the darkness here thy lover cowers;
O lead him, Love, from out this lonely land!

XI.

IN THE SHADOWS.

Come, Love, and sit beside me where alone
I sit within the silent shadows here;
Come, Love, come and drop with me tear for tear,
And mingle with my moaning thy sad moan.
Come, Love, and take my hand within thine own,
And let me touch thy face and feel thee near,
And breathe thou on my brow, and in mine ear
Let fall the tender music of thy tone.

O Love, alone within this doleful gloom
Have I sat sorrowing since life's early morn
Lost in untimely blight its splendid bloom,
And all my soul with sullen grief is torn
Come to me, Love, and lead me from my doom,
I am here in the darkness so forlorn!

XII.

DOOM.

Like a wan maiden sitting in the night
Beside her dying lover, while no sound
Breaks the oppressive silence brooding round,
Save as she yearns for morning's anxious light,
Her heart leaps up and listens with affright
To midnight footsteps falling on the ground:
So sits my soul in darkness as profound,
And hearkening expectant, marks the flight
Of Time who, with vast pinions wide unfurled,
And broken scythe and shattered glass, sweeps
down
Across the utmost boundaries of the world,
Between his lips that dread trump yet unblown.
From out the sky each starry light is hurled,
And chaos is of darkness the dread crown!

INTERLUDE.

*NOT every king may wear a crown,
Nor kingly he alone
Whose heart beneath a purple gown
Throbs on the royal throne;
The kingliest spirits that have been
The world hath never known.*

*Not they who vaunt of lineage long,
And of their gentle blood,
Are peers to noble hearts and strong,
Or to the truly good;
Not all that wear a diadem
In courtly halls have stood.*

*And oft is staid deserved meed,
And many the tales untold
Of high resolve and lordly deed
Would shame the knights of old;
That only angels chronicle
In characters of gold.*

*O wide is God's nobility,
Nor that which blood doth bind;
The kinship of humanity—
The realm of heart and mind:
From lowliest walks of life have sprung
The flowers of humankind.*

*Yet there is hope, though here unknown
Through all the world they move;
For them awaits a conqueror's throne;
They shall be crowned above:
But, ah, how sad their lot who live
Uncrowned of woman's love!*

PART II.—MIDNIGHT.

I.

COMPLAINT.

I.

ANOTHER! O Christ, can it be!
Will another love better than I
Whose love is as deep as the fathomless sea,
And as steadfast as stars in the sky?
Will she graciously yield to another's plea?
Be coldly deaf to my joyless cry?
Folded forever away from me—
Ah, better it were to die!

II.

What could I give her more?
Nor time nor eternity
Can take or add to the boundless store
Of a love that never can die;
And yet she doth spurn it o'er and o'er,
With cruel scorn in her beautiful eye:
Like a shattered wreck on a lonely shore
My helpless soul doth lie.

III.

Crowned with a thorny crown,
Scourged and crucified!
Hope's frail blossoms, in beauty blown,
Crushed by the foot of pride!

Ah, better indeed, ere tears should drown
The light wherein life is glorified,
Under the sod to lay us down
And slumber side by side!

II.

MARAHA.

I.

Yea, Love! mayhap 'twere better
If thou and I should hide
Our hearts away beneath the grass
Upon the green hill-side;
And there with palms close folded
Above the peaceful breast,
Unheeded and unheeding,
Sleep on and take our rest.

II.

I know the Spring would blossom,
And birds still build and sing;
That men would woo, and maidens wed,
And folly prune love's wing;
But thou and I should slumber,
Though stars forever set,
Forgetting to remember,
Remembering to forget.

III.

SYMPATHY.

I stood at sunset on a gentle hill,
And saw the twilight shadows slowly fall

And darken o'er the landscape spread below
 More fair than any picture, while as yet
 Against my forehead gleamed the massy gold
 Of untrod mines within the western clouds.
 Deft unseen hands had broidered every hill.
 Below was darkness; all above was light.
 The sky, a miracle of nameless hues,
 I saw as one in an apocalypse.
 Then like a sudden glory shot through gloom,
 Upon my half-unconscious spirit burst
 The boundless pity of the Universe.

IV.

SWEET NATURE HATH A BEING LIKE OUR
 OWN.

Sweet nature hath a being like our own,
 She hath her joys, she hath her secret pain;
 She hath her memories, like the sad refrain
 That haunts the heart when summer birds are flown.
 We cannot have our sorrows all alone,
 But nature shares them; when we weep, the rain,
 Like tears, shines on the hill-side and the plain,
 And when we laugh she echoes back our tone.
 O myriad-hearted nature! thine shall be
 The reverence and the tender sacrifice
 Of hearts that keep their first simplicity,
 Such as we read in gentle maidens' eyes.
 Though sight were blind, yet should our spirits see
 In thee the semblance of God's Paradise.

V.

IF IT WERE.

Love, that thou lov'st me not, too well I know;
Yet shouldst thou look to-night on my dead face
For the last time on earth, and there shouldst
trace

The silent meaning of a heavy woe,
Wouldst thou not feel a pang that it were so?
Would not regret within thy heart find place
That thou didst stay the guerdon and the grace
Thy lover so besought thee to bestow?
Wouldst thou not feel a want unknown before?
A something gone familiar grown so long?
A vanished light—a ship gone from the shore—
A presence past from out the world's great throng?
O Love, wouldst thou not miss the voice of yore?
The song-bird flown, wouldst thou not miss the
song?

VI.

FORESHADOWINGS.

Lo! in the valley, Love, the galingale
Bends to the blast beside the river-shore,
And Autumn pipes forever more and more,
While Summer's slender voices faint and fail.
Lo! now the liveried leaf grows sere and pale—
A phantom of the glory gone before—
And in the woodland walks we knew of yore,
Long since the songster ceased his tuneful tale.

Love, let us love; life's Summer waneth soon;
 Brief is the splendor of its fervent day;
 For every blood-red rose of balmy June
 Hath burst a tender bud of early May.
 I unto thee would consecrate a boon;
 O shall we love, or shall we still delay?

VII.

GONE.

Gone—and the sunlight gone, and gone the stars,
 And gone earth's beauty with her in the west,
 There yonder past the purple mountain's crest,
 And where the orange evening's lingering bars
 Grow pale before the flaming front of Mars.
 Gone—and gone with her all that seemeth best.
 Gone—and my heart is dead within my breast;
 Nay, cleft with doubts like fiery scimitars.
 Gone—and the music gone from earth and sky.
 Gone—and the heavens glow like molten brass.
 Gone—and the restless winds are hot and dry,
 And parched and thirsty is the land. Alas!
 It were a sweet relief if I could die,
 And lie at rest beneath the blackened grass.

VIII.

SUPPLICATION.

O God, and dost thou mock us when we cry?
 And wilt thou look upon our sharp distress,
 Neglectful of our utter helplessness,
 Nor heed nor help us though we were to die?

O takest thou no thought for those who lie
 Stripped and half-dead with wounds and weariness

Among life's thorns, and wilt thou pitiless
 Look on our hurts and pass us coldly by?
 O Thou who in thy Son didst feel the blow
 Of palm and spiteful scourge, the speechless pain
 Of loveless solitude—Thou who dost know
 The unutterable pangs of being slain
 Of love for love—O end my bitter woe!
 Yea, let me die, if so to die be gain!

IX.

UNREQUITED.

Not to be loved by one on whom the soul
 Dotes madly, not to feel the secret bliss,
 The solemn, sweet, long, lingering lover's kiss,
 And that fine ecstasy beyond control,
 Is empty darkness and eternal dole.

To fondly press a warm white hand and miss
 An answering pressure, in that soft abyss
 Of eyes to mark no lovelight, in the troll
 Of that rich speech to hear no tender word
 To voice dear love, no spoken syllable
 Responsive to the passionate heart to tell
 Its wild and yearning language hath been heard;
 That loudly hath been smitten love's deep chord—
 Is utter madness worse than death and hell!

X.

A FEAR.

I.

A withering doubt hath seized upon my soul,
For thou mayst meet another, and forget
My lonely life—yea, think of me no more,
And walk the world with one will love thee less.

II.

O dark with dolor is the morning sky,
And sad the pomp of Summer in its prime,
And chill the winds that o'er the wild white waste
Breathe desolation round the wintry world!

III.

Beyond creation's utmost boundaries;
Beyond the farthest star that whirls in space;
Beyond that sea of blue whose billows break
Upon a strand of worlds—were rest indeed!

XI.

DESOLATION.

I.

I know, I know I may not go
In wind and winter weather,
To seek a place where roses blow,
And lilies bloom together.

II.

I should not find them, and my gain
Would be a lost endeavor,
And empty hands and bitter pain,
Forever and forever.

III.

I cannot weep, though I would reap
The joyful harvest sown in tears;
I cannot put my heart to sleep
Against the coming years.

IV.

If love be taken from my heart,
Wouldst seek for bud or beauty there?
From love life cannot thrive apart
And bloom divinely fair.

XII.

A WINTER HOPE.

I.

O Winter, thou art warm at heart;
Thine every pulse doth throb and glow,
And thou dost feel life's joy and smart,
Beneath the blinding snow.

II.

Thine is the scent of bursting bud,
Of April shower and violet;
Thou feelest spring in all thy blood
Yearn up like sweet regret.

III.

Afar thou hear'st the song of birds,
And seest the bloom on Summer's cheek;
Thou catch'st the lowing of the herds,
The laughter of the creek.

IV.

Bland breezes up the southern slope
Of June come burdened with the breath
Of roses fresh and fair as hope
Triumphant over death.

V.

O sweet and rare thy visions are—
The flashing scythe, the new-mown hay,
The reaper's dance beneath the star,
The splendor of the day;

VI.

The shining grass, the peaceful stream,
The purple beauty of the hill—
No frost can blight thy blessèd dream,
Thy heart no wind can chill.

VII.

And I—ah me! I too above
The winter of my sharp distress,
May catch the vision of summer love,
And outstretched hands that bless,

XIII.

BY THE SEA.

O maiden watching by the wide, strange sea,
Hast thou a lover sailing o'er the main?
And dost thou feel the sweetly-bitter pain
Of a deferred but glad expectancy?
O hast thou watched the sun climb joyfully
Up the red east, then slowly drop again
Down the red west and into darkness wane,
And still thy lover hath not come to thee?
O maiden, let me take thy hand in mine,
And thou and I will sit together here,
And, gazing out across the bitter brine,
We'll mingle sob with sob and tear with tear;
For both are watchers by the dim deep sea
Of human life and love and destiny.

XIV.

IN SPRING.

O Love, the bliss of Spring is with us now;
The scent of bursting buds is in the air;
The panting bosom of the earth is bare,
She hath a crown of flowers on her brow.
List! music drops like rain from every bough,
And sounds of merry-making everywhere
Salute mine ears, and all the world is fair
With blush and bloom, but thou art fairer, thou!

O Love, come down from yonder sunless height;
Come down, O Love, for here are songs of mirth,
And love is here, and here are life and light,
But where thou sittest only Pride hath birth.
O Love, descend and gladden on my sight,
And dazzle with thy beauty all the earth!

XV.

FORGET-ME-NOT.

I.

Blue little flower from the sunny dell,
Where yesterday I plucked thee all alone,
Go to her, tell her that I love her well,
And all life's still deep music is mine own.

II.

Go to her, take the message that I give;
It were far better that her soft blue eyes
Should shine one moment on thee, than to live
So brief a life beneath uncertain skies.

III.

Go, in thine eloquence of beauty blest;
Go, and if haply it should fall thy lot
To lie one blissful instant on her breast,
In thy sweet language say, Forget me not.

XVI.

THE MINIATURE.

Two starry eyes, from out a floating dusk
Of cloud-like drapery, with a shadowy light
Of royal meekness in their depths, to-night
Gleam on mine own, and fragrance of rose-musk

Steals round me. Softly each red lip doth busk
The other to a tender pout, and might
That veil be lifted from her shoulders white
By other hands, they were too harsh and brusque.
O little face shut in these ivory walls!

Like evening's single star to shipwrecked eyes
That keep their weary watch when twilight falls,
Or whitely distant sails that slowly rise
With hope and rescue in their signal calls—
So came ye to me, crowned with glad surprise!

XVII.

LOVE'S CONSOLATION.

I stood to-day beside her mother's tomb—
Her mother, who died when my love was young;
And thought, when all is said and all is sung,
Is this the end of all life's bliss and bloom?
O this the end—decay, and dust and gloom?
The heart forever still, and still the tongue,
Gone triumph and despair, the last knell rung,
Deep rest and sleep, deep rest, nor doubt nor doom?
O what thy largess, life, if this be all!
The guerdon what of every earthly ill?
Ah! Hope were blind, and vainly would she call,
And Faith were impotent to do her will,
If this the end: but sweeter lot must fall;
Love whispereth, "Beyond is something still!"

XVIII.

DEATH'S MYSTERY.

O death, thou mystery of folded hands,
And pulseless heart, and unresponsive lips,
What secret dost thou hide in the eclipse
Of thy dread presence? O, from out all lands,
Beneath all skies, from ocean's wreck-strewn
 strands,
Where bones lie bleaching by the shattered ships;
From out the engulfing wave that softly slips
With treacherous kisses up the yellow sands;
From world-old battle-fields, whereon hath bled
And died earth's heroes; from the quiet green
Of country church-yards; from the narrow bed
Of many a long-forgotten king and queen—
There cometh no whisper from the countless dead
To tell what they have felt, or heard, or seen.

XIX.

I KNOW THEE, DEATH.

I know thee, death, thou'rt he who once did lay
Some potent spell on a dear friend of mine,
And then the light of love surceased to shine
In the fixed eyes, and slowly died away
From the pale lips the words that love would say,
Nor kiss nor call could win a single sign
Of recognition. Yea, I know thee, thine,
O death, is the all-mighty power to slay.

What terrible enchantment dost thou weave,
Thou fleshless sorcerer, that they who fall
Under thy subtle influence cannot cleave
The invisible bonds that bind them?—Nay, not all
The strenuous cries of those who sorely grieve,
Can pierce the silence of thine earthy pall.

XX.

DEATH AND NIGHT.

The bearded grass waves in the summer breeze;
The sunlight sleeps along the distant hills;
Faint is the music of the murmuring rills,
And faint the drowsy piping of the bees.
The languid leaves scarce stir upon the trees,
And scarce is heard the clangor of the mills
In the far distance, and the high, sharp trills
Of the cicada die upon the leas.
O death—what art thou? Hast thou peace like this?
Or, underneath the daisies, out of sight,
Hast thou in keep some higher, calmer bliss?
Ah me! 'tis pleasant to behold the light,
And missing this, O death, would we not miss
That weariness which makes us love the night?

XXI.

BRING THEM NOT BACK.

Yet, O my friend—pale conjurer, I call
Thee friend—bring, bring the dead not back again,
Since for the tears, the darkness and the pain
Of unrequited friendship—for the gall

That hatred mingles with fond love—for all
 Life's endless turmoil, bitterness and bane,
 Thou hast given dreamless rest. Still let the rain,
 And sunshine, and the dew from heaven fall
 Upon the graves of those whose peaceful eyes
 Thy breath hath sealed forever. Let the song
 Of summer birds be theirs, and in the skies
 Let the pale stars keep vigil all night long.
 O death, call not the holy dead to rise,
 Again to feel the cold world's ruth and wrong.

XXII.

ALONE, YET NOT ALONE.

Nursed up in loneliness, with mine own soul
 The one companion of my days and hours;
 Fed on the light of nature, as the flowers
 Are fed on the invisible motes that roll
 Through the quick ether; feeling the control
 Of that God-man who once with matchless powers
 Trod the far hills of Galilee, who towers
 High on his cross above the shining goal
 That this world's martyrs die to win; alone,
 Yet not alone, my heart hath converse had
 With earth's great sages: the inarticulate tone
 Of singing birds, the murmur sweet and sad
 Of meadow streams—O Love, these things have
 grown
 Into my life; yet love alone makes glad.

XXIII.

RETURNED.

I.

How all the weary months have fled
I scarcely know; I only knew
That still the rose its petals shed,
The sun still drank the dew.

II.

And thou art come, and with thee light
And love and beauty back to earth;
O bloom and fruitage after blight,
Abundance after dearth!

XXIV.

A JEWEL.

I.

Love, shouldst thou bid me pluck down out of
heaven,
To blaze within those glorious locks of thine—
Gems never queen yet wore—the shining Seven,
I could not gain them; I am not divine.

II.

If thou shouldst bid me plunge into the deep,
And seek a pearl such as no human eye
E'er saw, or mortal dreamed of in his sleep,
I could not win it, though I were to die.

III.

Yet such a jewel as time cannot defile,
Nor thieves break through and steal, nor fortune
dull,
I give thee, and thou spurnest with a smile
Severely cold yet chastely beautiful.

XXV.

LOVE'S MIST.

As mountains folded in a misty veil
Are hidden when the heaven makes complaint,
Their beauty seen not, save where, few and faint,
The wondrous colors glimmer ghostly pale;
Nor seen the lovely tints that downward trail
From airy heights no human hand could paint,
Nor beauteous shapes that, without flaw or taint,
Across the living landscape slowly sail:
So, shrouded in the mists of thy reserve,
O Love, not thy true loveliness appears;
Nor tender glow of eyes, nor dainty curve
Of smiling lip, nor song for lover's ears.
Love, surely thou wouldst true love's meed deserve!
I see not half thy beauty for my tears.

XXVI.

A LOVER'S PSALM.

I.

What if the morn no more should break,
And all the stars should cease to shine,
Wouldst thou still love for dear love's sake,
And count love's light divine?

II.

If all the hills stood sunset-flushed,
And o'er them, breathing summer air,
Bright Beauty like a goddess blushed,
Wouldst thou hold love more fair?

III.

And, ah! what if the flowers were not,
And hues should fade from sea and sky?
Wouldst still grant love a happier lot,
Though such sweet things could die?

IV.

What if the music of the spheres,
Mixed with Amphion's mellow lute,
Should softly strike on mortal ears,
Wouldst bid love's voice be mute?

V.

Or if the morning stars made moan,
And birds were dumb for evermore,
Wouldst thou believe love's troubled tone
Less tender than before?

VI.

Ah, Love! bring me no bridal dower,
Save love that hath its own delight
Beyond a song, or star, or flower,
For love is infinite.

XXVII.

A VIGIL.

I.

Down by the shore of the gray-lipped sea,
Down where the caverns are dark and deep,
Where the white gull screams when the wind goes
free,
And the breakers roar and the mad waves leap,
I sat, and the moon was a mystery,
And the world was lost in sleep.

II.

I heard no sound from the outer vast,
Though the spirit of storms was wild that night;
I heard no sound from the dreadful past,
Though a loud voice wailed from that land of
blight;
I knew death rode on the bitter blast,
But my heart was calm and light.

III.

For a thought of the morning came,
And the pulse in my bosom beat
Like a melody born of a musical name,
And the time grew strangely sweet;
And my life rose up like a fragrant flame,
And a blossoming world at my feet.

IV.

O sorrow was on the sea that night,
And death in its awful din,

And the white gull screamed in her lonely flight,
But my soul was calm within;
For life had climbed to a holier height,
And love was free from sin.

XXVIII.

THE MORNING COMETH.

I.

O sad the night to tired eyes
Long burdened with the weight of tears;
But sweet the blush of eastern skies,
When morning's light appears.

II.

Yet sweeter far, when death's dark night
Hath sealed on earth our aching eyes,
To see in heaven God's glorious light
Leap up immortal skies.

XXIX.

IN THE TWILIGHT.

Hope in the orient, hope faint and pale;
Cheat not thyself, O heart, lest faith should fail,
Nor cheat despair:
Hope is not always kind.
Yon lark, whose music thrills the morning air,
Whose winnowing pinions cleave the sobbing
wind—

The wordless prayer
Of weary earth for rest—
Is surer sign unto the tired sight,
Tired of watching through the long sad night
For tardy dawn to light the starless skies,
Than yon uncertain white.
O heart, stir not within my breast,
Stir not, O heart, by night so long oppressed,
Lest yonder hint of morning cheat mine eyes.
Sweet Pity hath assumed a strange disguise,
Sweet Pity to proud Love so near akin;
For yesternorn, as through the fields I walked,
When all the world rang with the joyful din
Of wingèd voices in the earth and sky,
I met her—her, the loveliest in the land,
And, with a soft compassion in her eye,
She gave the small white lily of her hand
To me, who hearkened dumbly while she talked;
And though I cannot now recall her words,
I could not hear for her sweet voice the birds.
Ah me! Ah me!
The very grass was grand!
The very grass o'er which she moved away,
And heaven drew nearer earth that golden day.

XXX.

HEART'S-EASE.

I.

Life must have its dreary days;
Heart, look up, be brave and strong!

Darkened all thy devious ways,
Lost thy hopes in life's dim maze,
Yet shall blame give way to praise,
Right shall surely conquer wrong.

II.

Is it grievous to remember?
Brings the past a bitter boon?
Cover up each old dead ember
Of the long, long past November
And the chill and dark December;
Naught can gloom the smile of June.

III.

This the lesson of the flower—
All who wait, wait not in vain:
Fret not, then, when shadows lower;
Whether sunshine, whether shower,
Know that in the darkest hour
Pleasure follows after pain.

INTERLUDE.

*I SAW in heaven a solitary star
 Rise out of darkness clothed in living light,
 And speed its shining message from afar
 Across the lonely chaos of the night.
 The lesser Bear about the Boreal pole,
 Like a worn traveler on a weary march,
 Had in its cycle well-nigh ceased to roll,
 And pale the stars grew in that world-wide arch.
 But now, when other lustres had waxed dim,
 And night was burden in the depth of space,
 Up from behind the faint horizon's rim
 Arose a fuller glory into place.
 And there it burned, with radiance newly born,
 Till night her ebon wings had closely furled,
 And in the east the ruddy light of morn
 Shook like a sudden splendor o'er the world.
 O blessed lesson! In life's troubled night,
 From out the darkness shall arise a hope
 That, crescent, shall grow brighter and more bright,
 Till through the gloom we shall no longer grope;
 No longer grope; and upon aching eyes
 Shall strike the morn, and night shall pass away,
 And from behind the veil, across the skies,
 Shall burst the dawn of Love's eternal day.*

PART III.—MORNING.

I.

AT DAWN.

I.

THE long night draweth to its close;
Behold! the daybreak doth appear,
And in the east the orange-rose
Of morning shineth clear.

II.

The dew-drop glistens on the spray,
And o'er the lush green meadow-grass,
Parting the folded mists away,
The whistling reapers pass.

III.

With mellow voice of milk-maid blends
The lowing of the distant kine,
And faintly down the hollow glens
Morn's dying star doth shine.

IV.

O sweet to feel the life of dawn
The bounding pulses thrill along,
And sweet to hear, o'er lea and lawn,
The songster's matin song.

V.

And sweet to see, when storm and night
Are past, the day-star beam above;
Ah! Paradise is surely light,
And God eternal love!

II.

DOWN THE LANE.

I.

Blossom here at my feet,
Muffled in mosses and fern,
O was it not here that she passed to the street,
With a gracious bow, as I saw her turn,
And a marvelous smile and sweet?

II.

O here in your still retreat,
Blooming in beauty alone,
No fairer flower than you, I weet,
In a royal robe has shone;
And yet her array was more complete,
And her beauty rarer blown.

III.

Now tell me if she be true;
Your petals shall prophesy;
'Tis meet that they should, for they are blue,
And blue is her beautiful eye;

Yea, blossom, bluer than you,
And bluer than yon blue sky;—
Not false? Ah, now what shall I do?
Sweet thing, I fear that you lie!

III.

A BIRTHDAY SONG.

I.

No slight boon have the changeful years
Brought unto thee, O virgin heart!
As flowers wet with dewy tears,
I watch the buds of hope dispart,
While April merges into May,
Thy life's sweet April,
Love.

II.

This is the time when roses bloom,
And thee, my rose, my fairest flower,
My one sweet blossom in the gloom
My own life hath foreboding shower,
I greet upon thy natal day;
Spurn not the greeting,
Love.

III.

Life of my life, love of my love,
Bless God for thy nativity!
Thou art my star, my hope, my dove,
My life is staid in thee.

Fold thou no meed from me away;
Love's guerdon, Love, is
Love!

IV.

LOVE BROOKS NOT DELAY.

Days and sennights, months and years—
Time hath known no lapse;
Gloom and glory, smiles and tears—
Many are love's mishaps.
Blight and blossom, frost and fire—
Beauty fadeth fast;
Love consumeth of desire,
Summer soon is past.
Dawn and darkness, morn and eve,
Golden locks and gray;
Hearts that wait can only grieve;
Love brooks not delay!

V.

A MEMORY.

I.

It cometh again and again—
The ghost of a melody;
With an under-sound of secret pain
In its oft-repeated, faint refrain—
The song that she sang to me.

II.

The song of yesternight;
An idyl pathetic and sweet;
A song that rose with a strange delight,
Till it fell like a wounded bird in flight—
And I knelt in tears at her feet.

III.

I hear it, and still shall hear;
The voice of a day that is past;
With its hidden pain, and hope, and fear,
'Twill haunt my life with its sorrowful cheer,
Till I die at her feet, at last!

VI.

INCOGNITO.

Lo! I wander in a maze;
Laughing lip, and grieving eye;
Smiling blame, and frowning praise—
Strange and wondrous are love's ways,
Evermore a mystery!

VII.

AN IDYL OF LIFE.

I.

Love, if beyond the azure overhead
There be a place where happy spirits meet,
Nor marriage is, nor tears, nor any dead,
To die how passing sweet!

II.

Past all the cruel fever and the pain,
Past barren hopes, and plans, and foolish fears,
Past all annoy, to die indeed were gain—
The meed of longing tears.

III.

Only to sleep a long and dreamless sleep,
Nor heed the sunshine, nor the gentle showers,
Nor shepherd's song, nor sheep-bell on the steep,
Nor smell the fragrant flowers;

IV.

Only to sleep, nor see the summer sky;
To sleep, nor feel the joy that life can give—
Ah, Love, though it may be a gain to die,
Yet it is sweet to live!

VIII.

SONG.

I.

If thou be true, dear Heart,
Or false, I cannot tell;
I know how beautiful thou art,
I know I love thee well;
I know I'm sad when thou art sad,
And more than glad when thou art glad.

II.

And yet, I would not keep
Thee from one pang or pain,
If sown in sorrow, thou shouldst reap
Of good one golden grain;
For so the seed, sown tearfully,
In flowers of light should gathered be.

IX.

LEAVE ME NOT YET.

I.

Leave me not yet, O Love,
Leave me not yet;
The acacia and the columbine
With dew are scarcely wet,
And yonder stately eglantine
Still wooes the mignonette.
Not yet, O Love, not yet!

II.

Delay a moment, Love,
O make delay!
In purple chambers of the west
We'll watch the dying day,
And from the foreland and the height
Scare shadowy night away.
Delay, O Love, delay!

III.

Haste not to go, dear Love,
O make no haste!
Not yet the lily foldeth up
Her sweetness—art more chaste?
Not yet doth modest Dian fleet
Across the dusky waste.
Dear Love, O make no haste!

IV.

Heed not the darkness, Love,
Nor shadows heed;
I see faint Hesper in the heaven,
And the firefly in the mead;
But if thou leave me now, O Love,
Then cometh night indeed.
O Love, give night no heed!

X.

CARMEN NOCTIS.

I.

Now sleep hath kissed the white brow of my Love,
And closed her pearly lids with touches light,
While round her, cloud-like, musically move
The wingèd dreams of night.

II.

The river murmurs by its hidden bowers,
In monotones that swell or faintly swoon;
And sighing out their souls, the love-sick flowers
Yearn to the pallid moon,

III.

From out the dingle ripples sweet and clear
The plaintive love-song of sad Philomel,
And Echo, o'er the solitary mere,
Mocks back her ritournel.

IV.

There is a rustle through the damask fold
Of curtains at the casement wreathed with vine,
And Notus, through the drapery fringed with gold,
Steals in with song divine:

V.

Steals in across the quaintly carven plinth,
With gifts from lands where Summer ever smiles,
With subtle perfume of the hyacinth,
And spice from Indian isles:

VI.

Steals in to sacrifice at Beauty's shrine;
He who alone may tread that fair domain—
O dreamer from the southern palm and pine,
Thy worship is in vain!

VII.

The maiden sleeps. Keep watch, O silent stars!
Keep watch, sweet Luna, now my lady sleeps!
Till glad Aurora comes, watch, ruddy Mars;
Till Tithon newly weeps!

XI.

HESPER.

I.

O star of the pale-bosomed night,
Let thy smile re-illumine the world;
Like a garment the darkness clothes valley and
height,
In the dim-caverned west dies the opaline light,
And the pinions of sleep are unfurled.

II.

Come forth from thy tent in yon cloud,
That thy beauty may gladden the skies;
See, the mountains lie folded in mist like a shroud,
And the river that loves thee is singing aloud,
And the summer wind seeks thee with sighs.

III.

In her chamber, 'mid curtains of white,
My lady lies silent in sleep;
O star, shed thy balm through the strokes of the
night,
Charm the hours, as they go, that her dreams may
be bright,
And the hush of the darkness be deep.

IV.

And lo! when the gates of the dawn
Shall unfold, and the shepherdess leads

Her white flock to feed on some high dewy lawn,
 And the mists and the visions of night are with-
 drawn,
 And the rivulet sings through the meads,—

v.

Then fair shall my lady appear,
 And sweet as the breath of the May;
 And her heart shall be light as the heart of the
 year,
 And shall throb into song, as she pauses to hear
 The sound of the wakening day.

XII.

MORNING SONG.

I.

Star of the morning, arise!
 Arise in the light of thy love;
 Faintly the dawn in the orient skies
 Awakes from its dreaming the dove.
 O Love,
 Shine on the dark world with thine eyes!

II.

Come out from the dim land of dreams;
 Come out, for the dawning is near;
 In the heart of the lily the dew-drop gleams,
 In the eye of the rose is a tear.
 Ah, Dear,
 Aurora's light already beams.

III.

She cometh from over the sea,
And a hint of her coming was heard,
When the flowers unfolded o'er woodland and lea,
And a song shook the breast of a bird;
It stirred
The whole sleeping world, save thee.

IV.

O blithe is the voice of the rill,
And the print of the sandaled feet
Of Morning shines on yonder hill,
And the day goes far and fleet,
O Sweet,
The day—and thou slumberest still!

XIII.

FIOR DI LEVANTE.

I.

I think thou canst not be, Love, what thou art,
Or if so be, thou seemest more than all,
For when thou speak'st I hear the blithe birds
call,
And in this there is something which is part
Of yon blue cope and ruddy shafts that dart
From out the sunset, of the mountains tall,
Of laughing brook and loud-voiced waterfall,
And e'en the love that blossoms in my heart.

I hear in sobbing of the solemn sea,
In sighing shell upon the silent shore,
In distant song of stars, in whispering lea,
A frail, faint music I have known before—
A voice like unto thine, yet not of thee,
For than all these thou still art something more.

II.

O Love, thou art a part of that rich flower
Which there in light unfolds a purple bloom;
Whose delicate aroma fills my room
With hints of thine own meekly regal power.
Ah, yes! I know thee now; for but this hour,
Athwart the sunlight there, with fine perfume
A shadow fell from out the purple gloom—
As falls the mist-blue light when tempests lower—
And took a shape of fragrance, which was thine.
O Zante! thou and my sweet Love are one!
O Zante! it is said thou art divine;
For thou in Hyacinthus' blood wast sown
In loveliness, and like this Love of mine
Art beautiful, as she is Beauty's own!

XIV.

A LOVER'S VESPER SONG.

I.

The blue bends down to kiss the hills,
The hills rise up to kiss the blue,
They clasp and kiss at their own sweet wills—
Love, why not I and you?

II.

The sea leaps forward to the land,
The land hugs close the amorous sea;
They meet and marry on the strand—
Love, why not thus meet me?

III.

Look off, and mark the fervid west,
How night stoops down to fold the day,
How day leans on night's throbbing breast—
Sweet Love, shall we delay?

IV.

The hills and sky, the land and sea,
The day and darkness teach us this,—
That you must wed, dear Love, with me,
Or life's best guerdon miss.

XV.

APOLOGY.

I.

O what a life to live, Dear,
If love were not, if love were not!
Or what might Heaven give, Dear,
Of sweeter lot, of sweeter lot?
No angel form in woman's guise,
To give the great world birth,
With hidden wings and holy eyes
Might meekly walk the earth.

II.

O what a death to die, Dear;
Bereft of love, bereft of love!
For torn the fondest tie, Dear,
What hope above, what hope above?
Ah, weary were the years, I trow,
If close within the heart
We kept no shrine where we might bow
From all the world apart.

XVI.

THIS TRUTH THE WORLD'S.

This truth the world's, that whoso loves is free;
No cankering fetters mar his glad estate;
That happy man who finds indeed his mate
Mounts straightway up into eternity.
He is not slave to time, nor trouble he;
Not bondman unto any cruel fate;
He knoweth not the pain of those who wait
For that which never was and cannot be.
Free of the free, and blessed of the blest;
Prince-prophet who hath a divine foretaste
Of that rich joy which spirits feel above;
Glad heart that entereth early into rest;
Blithe pilgrim o'er life's drear and desert waste,
Thou art immortal. Yea, for God is love!

XVII.

SONG.

O roses, Love, are blushing red,
And bright the lily's bloom,
And sweet and rare, beyond compare,
The morning's rich perfume.
A braver beauty never shone
Beneath serener skies,
And ne'er have blown in tint and tone
Blooms of diviner dyes;
And thou too, Love, art fairer grown
To love-anointed eyes.

XVIII.

LOVE'S HEALING.

I.

Why should thy songs be ever gay,
O love so full of grief and pain?
I sing another song to-day
That hath a sad refrain;
A little lay
Like tender April rain.

II.

Love's tears make love's bright blossoms grow—
O blessed be the frequent showers!
Nor summer sun, nor winter snow,

Can yield such priceless dowers:
It rains, and lo!
The earth is full of flowers.

III.

A cloud, like an unwelcome truth,
Oft in its bosom bears a boon
We wis not of until, forsooth,
It droppeth like a tune —
O heart of ruth,
Like dew in nights of June.

IV.

Come shine or shower, come bliss or bane,
What matter, if they healing bring?
Love binds but with a golden chain,
Each link a wedding ring.
O happy twain
Who weep, and weeping sing!

XIX.

MY LADY.

I.

As shine from yonder dusky skies
The stars that fret the pallid night,
So shine my Lady's heavenly eyes,
To fill the world with tender light.

II.

Her voice is sweet as tinkling rills
That meet and mingle musically,
And trip together down the hills,
To lose themselves within the sea.

III.

Not sweeter is the breath of June,
That stirs her garments lovingly,
Than are the words which, like a tune,
Fall from her lips melodiously.

IV.

Her hair is like a golden mesh
Wherein the tangled sunshine lies,
And like primroses, fair and fresh,
Her cheeks the dewy morning dyes.

V.

As leans the lily on its stalk,
When lightly falls the wooing shower,
So leans she from the garden walk,
To catch the scent of some rare flower.

VI.

The earth is fairer since she is,
And nearer leans the happy sky;
And half his terrors death shall miss,
Because my Lady, too, must die.

XX.

LOVE'S MIRROR.

Go to thy mirror, Love, where thou may'st view
The rose of beauty blooming in thy face,
And chide me not that, dazzled by thy grace,
I give thee praise thou countest not thy due.
A lovelier lip than thine I never knew,
And never life in fairer form found place,
And Time, methinks, were he but to erase
One lovely line, forevermore must rue.
O love were slain of love, if in thy pride
Of secrecy thou shouldst veil every charm,
And that whereof he thrives to love denied,
Himself must to himself do mortal harm.
Nay look, Love, in thy glass, nor longer chide
When love in passionate praises waxeth warm.

XXI.

THE DREAM.

Last night I dreamed that thou wast by my side,
And thy sweet voice fell flute-like on mine ear,
In accents solemn, low, yet silver-clear,
And thou didst look upon me tender-eyed.
Then all my passionate longing and my pride,
All my dull pain of hopelessness and fear,
Vanished like mist upon a mountain mere
Which the warm sun salutes at morning-tide.

All night my heart was full of speechless bliss,
And though thou wast less human than divine,
I felt at last I nevermore should miss
From out my life that loveliness of thine;
For when our souls closed in one swooning kiss,
I knew eternally that thou wast mine.

XXII.

SONG.

I.

Fly, robin, fly!
Fly to the nest of thy love;
Fly, for the evening star is on high,
And the moon is over the grove.
Fly, robin, fly away,
For night is come with shadows gray,
O fly away, away!

II.

Fly, robin, fly!
Fly at the call of thy mate;
Fly, for the darkness covers the sky,
And it is hard to wait.
Fly, robin, do not stay;
Hush! it is no longer day;
O haste away, away!

III.

Go, O foolish heart!
Go, with the robin's flight;
No longer keep from truth apart;
Go, seek thy Love to-night.

O hasten, heart, away;
They only lose who make delay;
O heart, away, away!

XXIII.

REVELATION.

I.

Great God! what was it gave me utterance
To-night, and nerved my heart, that I did dare
To brave my fate, and blindly throttle chance,
And gain a good that seems too great to bear?

II.

O peace and plenty after plague and dearth!
Not wholly dark the world, nor drear the way.
God grant I may not fail from off the earth,
Nor find that I have dreamed with breaking day!

XXIV.

CAROL.

Night from the dark world
Her mantle hath drawn,
And low on thy lattice, Love,
Trembles the dawn.
Morn from the orient
Cometh in pride
Of saffron and crimson,
And fair as a bride.

In thy garden the roses
Are lying awake,
And never a moment
Of slumber they take;
They glow with the tidings
They bear, Love, for thee—
A message of morning
From over the sea.
O tarry no longer
With dull-lidded sleep;
Fly the false visions
That have thee in keep!
Rise in thy loveliness,
Morning-to-be;
Lo, I am waiting, Love,
Dawn thou on me!

XXV.

ALL' ALBA.

I.

'Twas morning, and the western sky was dark;
'Twas morning, and the west was drowned in
gloom;
But in the east, as if a rose did bloom
Within the doubtful darkness, grew a mark
Of rosy light and spread in a wide arc,
And higher up the heavens slowly clomb.
Then those great clouds that in the west did
loom
Were sundered quite and vanished. A swift lark

Rose from the meadow straight up in the sky,
 And from his breast upbubbled a sweet song
 That fainter grew and fainter, as more high
 He rose, yet seemed in rapture to prolong,
 Until in heaven it did fail and die,
 Below reëchoed by a countless throng.

II.

The world is very warm and full of light;
 Ay, full of light and beauty and of song;
 I cannot understand how I so long
 Have shivered 'neath the sombre wings of Night.
 I cannot find a thing that is not bright
 And glowing with the gladness of a strong,
 Great love, and on the earth there is no wrong,
 Nor mildew, sorrow, care, nor any blight.
 There is a music o'er the whole wide world,
 And choral voices hymning in love's sphere,
 And like the Sphinx, Despair her wings hath furled,
 And very dull and heavy is her ear;
 Within my heart there lies a hope impearled—
 A new-found hope: O joy is everywhere!

XXVI.

LOVE DOTH NOT IN CASTLES DWELL.

I.

Love doth not in castles dwell,
 Nor in cot nor palace he;
 Not on land nor on the sea,
 Nor by flood nor fell.

II.

Love is neither here nor there;
Not in cradle, nor in grave,
Not in dungeon with the slave;
Love is everywhere.

III.

Love is not a poet's dream;
'Tis not that, nor is it this—
Pain or pleasure, bale or bliss;
Neither gloom nor gleam.

IV.

Love cannot be told by years;
Never young, and never old;
Never bought, and never sold,
Save for smiles or tears.

V.

Not below, nor yet above;
Neither is he bond nor free;
Lo, behold the mystery:
Love is—only love!

XXVII.

LOVE HATH COME TO ME.

I.

My heart sings as the birds sing
In the soft summer weather,
And all the little loves take wing
'Round the green world together;

The fountains purl a sweeter tune,
The flowers are fairer far to see,
And richer is the life of June,
Since love hath come to me.

II.

It was but yester-even,
Amid the shadows gray,
True heart to heart was given
Forever and a day;
O earth, such happy, happy words
Bring Eden back again to thee!
Ah, sing your blithest, merry birds,
For love hath come to me.

III.

Sound through the dusk, O whip-poor-will,
Sound, while the slow stars brighten,
Your ritournel from hill to hill,
Till morning skies shall lighten;
Old world, thou yet art very bright;
Let shine or shadow round me be,
I'll welcome day, or welcome night,
Since love hath come to me.

XXVIII.

A SONG OF THE SUNSET.

I.

List, Love, oh list!
Hear'st thou the voice of the trees?
Hear'st thou the music of the mist
Stealing along the leas?

O, sweet yon orange light
Against the deep sky's blue repose,
And bland the breath of the summer night,
And rare the scent of the rose.

II.

Look, Love, oh look
At the silvery shine of the stars,
Beginning to tremble where lately shook
The sunset's crimson bars!
And there in the deepening dusk,
Across the billowy lawn,
The lilies lie in a dream of musk,
Awaiting the dewy dawn.

III.

O Love, the night is come,
And where the reeds and rushes quiver
The voices of the day are dumb,
O'er hill and field and river;
And nature's fairest gems are strown
Adown that radiant way
The spicy breath of morn is blown,
Upon earth's bridal day.

IV.

Sleep, Love, oh sleep!
For night on the weary world
Hath flitted down yon azure steep,
And her dew-wet wings are furled;

O tenderly on tired eyes
 She lays her shadowy hand,
 And rich the balm and sweet the calm
 O'er all the quiet land.

XXIX.

OVERWROUGHT.

Last night, beneath the summer stars we stood,
 And with her fragrant breath against my cheek,
 I twined her hair in fashion of the Greek,
 And from the roses round about us strewed
 I made for her a crown as red as blood.
 The fountain rose from out the white swan's beak
 And fell with music; still she did not speak,
 Nor did I break the silence of her mood,
 But marked the humor of her maiden art.
 She stood with eyes downcast, and I could hear—
 Or fancied so—the beating of her heart.
 She stooped to pluck a red rose growing near,
 And as she thrust the thorny boughs apart,
 I kissed her peerless cheek, and lo, a tear!

XXX.

DOUBTED.

I.

What? dost thou doubt me, Love?
 Have I waited, then, in vain?
 Doth naught that I suffered prove
 My passion is deeper than pain?

Constant when thou didst scorn;
Patient when thou didst spurn;
Hoping, though hope of hope were shorn;
Is there something still to learn?

II.

Nor time, nor space, nor circumstance
Can make or mar again;
A sovereign ordered not of chance,
Love is not slave to men.
Yet fearest thou that he will change,
Now love to love is kind?
Ah, thou forgettest he may not range,
For love was always blind!

XXXI.

THE GIFT.

See what I bring to thee, dear Love, dear Love,
To type the pure affection of my heart;
I might not bring an earnest to impart
How pure it is so well as this white dove.
And yet were I to seek by this to prove
My innocence of any specious art,
I might defeat myself and in the part
Of arrant knave, or fool, or jester move.
O yet believe me by this snow-white bird—
By every agony that doth inure
The heart to waiting and to hope deferred—
By every hope that ever did endure
Against a blighting scorn or bitter word—
My trust is loyal, my affection pure!

XXXII.

FORBEARANCE.

That I should love thee seemeth, Love, most meet;
For who that once hath looked in thy true eye,
And felt thy maiden soul's white purity,
Could other than do homage at thy feet?
But, ah! I wonder, Love, when I repeat
Love's oft-told tale and to thee madly cry,
Thou dost not spurn my presence utterly,
Or swiftly from my passionate arms retreat.
O Love, that I should even dare to hear
One uttered syllable of thine, or hold
For one brief moment thy warm hand, nor fear
To sit beside thee, seemeth overbold.
Ah! lover never yet was suffered near
A mortal maid of so divine a mould!

XXXIII.

LOVE'S VICTORY.

Love, should I find thee other than I deem—
Less noble than I hold thee in my thought—
Then might the potent spell which love hath
wrought,
Fade like the baseless tissues of a dream;
For if thou be not that which thou dost seem,
My reason to my reason this hath taught—
That though thou be with outward beauty fraught,
It can no want of inward grace redeem.

But, ah! I wrong thee by this cruel doubt,
That ever thou couldst so dissimulate;
And now my love-wise heart doth reason flout,
That he should dare presume on love's estate;
And sorely pressed in an inglorious rout,
He flies the field and yields the spoil to fate.

XXXIV.

RECOMPENSE.

I.

Out of the darkness, out of the night,
Out of the shadows of dole and dread,
Out of the bitterness, out of the blight;
O joy! let the dead past bury its dead.

II.

For the hurt there is healing; for weary ones rest;
Comfort for those who in loneliness weep;
Lo! the last sun sinks away in the west,
And so He doth give His belovèd ones sleep.

III.

Large is the guerdon, O Life, that thou givest;
Recompense sweeter than rest there is none;
O heart, it is thine! be glad that thou livest!
Sweet, sweet is the calm when the tempest is done!

XXXV.

EPINICION.

I.

And thou art mine, and mine are love and peace;
Yea, thou and these are mine forevermore;
The cold dark Winter of my life is o'er,
And Spring comes in crowned with the year's increase.

II.

Yea, mine for time and for eternity;
To keep and cover here within my heart
Through all the years, and nevermore to part—
Nay, death could not dissever thee and me!

III.

Mine only, and the night is overpast;
Mine, and the morning moves upon the sky;
Mine, mine alone! O joy to live or die!
Through flood and fire to the palm at last!

L'ENVOY.

AN AUTUMN SONG.

I.

O HEARKEN, Love, across the fell,
And up the flaming dingle,
The lusty songs of reapers swell,
And sheep-bells faintly mingle.
The sumac on the hillside burns,
And, each pale leaf adorning,
The yellow sunlight softly yearns
Through this October morning.

II.

Adown the aisles of yonder wold,
Dear Love, do you remember
How gladly, hand in hand, we strolled
And thought not of December?
But now the golden-rods alone
Stand in the sun and shiver,
Where then a summer glory shone
By brook and rill and river.

III.

O Love, we will not wail the past,
Though Autumn cometh quickly,
And round the heart death's icy blast
Shall sow its sorrows thickly;
For in God's heaven the winter comes
With desolation never,
But there perennial Summer blooms
Forever and forever.

SONNETS.

AFTER THE BATH.

Now the swart slave-girls bring their perfumes
sweet,

And lightly sprinkle all her lustrous hair,
Her supple neck, her ivory breast half-bare,
Her glowing limbs, and e'en her pink-white feet.

Languid she leans against the cushioned seat,
While one white hand along the ebon chair
Wanders to stroke the pard-skin lying there;
Upon her eyes the jetty lids half meet.

What dreams she of, now that the bath is done,
The unguents ended, and the cool robe brought?
Of lovers? Nay—again beneath the sun

She sees the red arena's sands upcaught
In wild beasts' bloody jaws, and one by one
The gladiators dying where they fought.

ARACHNE.

AH, poor Arachne, what availed thy skill?

A mortal ne'er can match immortal art;

Better it were that thou hadst brimmed thy heart
With housewife thrift and peace, than thus to fill
Thy life with anguish and the years with ill.

What strange new pangs did through thy being
dart,

As loathly change crept o'er thee, part by part,
When the proud goddess wrought on thee her will?
Dost thou remember sadly those old days

When all the maidens envied thy deft hands,
And bitter in their ears was thy just praise?

Now is thy sorrow told in many lands,
And every gossamer by dewy ways
Shines with thy tears that bead its silken strands.

NATURE'S CHILD.

To thy great heart, O Nature, take thy child;
Close fold him in thy large, serene embrace;
Hide from the garish light his tired face;
Safe shelter him from storm-winds loud and wild.
Around him let thy hoary rocks be piled,
And sentinel trees guard well the quiet place
Where o'er him sunny shadows interlace,
And gentle violets breathe their perfume mild.
There let the birds at morn and evening sing;
There let the small stream chime its silver bells;
There let the wind its viewless censers swing,
And monk-like crickets chant in grassy cells.
O Nature, thy cool mantle o'er him fling,
And weave into his sleep thy sweetest spells.

FINEM RESPICE.

O NATURE, take me to thy heart once more,
Nor let the mornings be less bright that I
Beneath the murmuring leaves and flowers lie,
Nor let the happy birds that sing and soar
Repeat one joyful note the less, that o'er
My resting-place the summer grass is high;
I would not that to any human eye
The world should be less lovely than of yore.
For life to me is full of pleasantness,
And all the ways of earth are fresh and sweet;
The night hath breathed upon me but to bless,
And morn with dew hath laved my eager feet;
So when the cool turf on my brow shall press,
Still let the prosperous seasons o'er me meet.

ONE WITH NATURE.

O WIZARD Nature, make me one with thee;
One with the rolling earth, the leafy trees,
One with the winds that breathe soft melodies,
One with the vital sunlight, large and free.
I would the springing grass were part of me,
The brook-flags waving in the errant breeze,
The daisies burning star-like on the leas,
The cool gray forest's gloom and mystery.
I would my heart should pulsate with the beat
Of ocean's mighty throbbing; I would go
Where'er thine influence should lead my feet,
As roving streams still seaward ever flow.
Dear Nature, warm me with thy generous heat,
And into thine own being let me grow,

A SEA GRAVE.

YEA, rock him gently in thine arms, O deep!
No nobler heart was ever hushed to rest
Upon the chill, soft pillow of thy breast—
No truer eyes didst thou e'er kiss to sleep.
While o'er his couch the wrathful billows leap,
And mighty winds roar from the darkened west,
Still may his head on thy cool weeds be pressed,
Far down where thou dost endless silence keep.
Oh, when, slow moving through thy spaces dim,
Some scaly monster seeks its coral cave,
And pausing o'er the sleeper, stares with grim
Dull eyes a moment downward through the wave,
Then let thy pale green shadows curtain him,
And swaying sea-flowers hide his lonely grave.

SYRINX.

LEAVE me to wither here by this dark pool,
Where the winds sigh amid the shuddering reeds,
And slimy things creep through the water-weeds,
And snakes glide out from coverts dim and cool.
Leave me, O Pan; thou hast been made the fool
Of thy hot love; go where thy white flock feeds,
And pipe thy ditties in the dewy meads,
And watch the silly sheep that own thy rule.
Get hence; I am become a loveless thing;
No charms of mine shall ever tempt thee more;
No more in valleys green and echoing
Shalt thou surprise and fright me, as of yore;
Go, clash thy hoofs, and make the woodlands ring,
But let me wither here on this dark shore.

VANISHED.

It was but yesterday I saw his sheep,
The while he led them up the height to feed,
And heard him merrily pipe upon his reed,
And mock the echoes from yon rocky steep;
'Twas yesterday I found him fast asleep,
His flock forgot and wantoning in the mead,
His pipe flung lightly by with idle heed,
And shadows lying round him, cool and deep.
But though I seek I shall not find him more,
In dewy valley or on grassy height;
I listen for his piping—it is o'er,
From out mine ears gone is the music quite;
There on the hill the sheep feed as before,
But Pan, alas, has vanished from my sight!

ROMEO TO JULIET.

LOVE, touch my mouth with kisses as with fire;
Lean hard against my breast, that I may feel
From thy warm heart its influence subtly steal
Through all my veins; with overmuch desire
My spirit fainteth, and my lips suspire
Swiftly with heavy breathings; round me reel
The shadows of the dark, and downward wheel
The dim, far stars from heaven; draw me nigher
Unto thy bosom, Love, for all my sense
Of earth and time fleets from me . . . Dayward
flows
The stream of night, and into yon immense
Blue void the slow moon fails; hold me more close,
Lest from thine arms my spirit hasten hence,
Going that viewless way no mortal knows,

•

CLEOPATRA TO ANTONY.

Go from me now; I will no longer feel
Your burning kisses on my fevered lips;
You shall not hold one moment ev'n the tips
Of my shut fingers, though you cry and kneel.
My face aches, and my tired senses reel;
Through all my veins a drowsy poison slips,
My sight grows dim with gradual eclipse,
For slumber on mine eyes has set his seal.
Get hence; I will no more to-night; the bars
Of love are placed against you now; go while
I hate you not, my Roman; the sick stars
Wax faint and pallid in the dawn's red smile.
Look! I am quenched in sleep, as nenuphars
Are quenched in the broad bosom of the Nile.

VOX DOLORIS.

JERUSALEM, B. C., 458.

NAY, but I loved thee so—and love thee still:

Look, didst thou not, when thou a stranger wast

In my far Babylon, the bright, the vast,

Lead me the happy bondmaid of thy will?

Why wilt thou put me from thee? What dire ill

Have I wrought on thy heart? I hold thee fast,

And cling and cry till life's last hope is past,

And faith grows sick with fears that scorch and kill.

Is thy God cruel, that this needs must be?

Canst thou forget the love, the dear delight,

The song, the dance, the mirth and minstrelsy,

Wherewith the swift days fled, too brief and
bright?

Shall not our babes' sweet voices cry to thee,

Through all the hollow watches of the night?

PARTING.

LOVE, are our lives so long that we may part
For months and years, nor feel a pang of grief?
Or is the measure of the days so brief
That, as they go, they leave no bitter smart
To trace its dreary record on the heart?
O, unto thee is not the fallen leaf,
The withered landscape, and the rustling sheaf,
Presageful of a time when we must start
Upon a longer journey, nevermore
To come again and clasp each other's hand,
And look with love into each other's eyes?
Lo! here we may not tarry long, for o'er
Our sight a vapor gathers, and the land
Lies wrapped in gloom descending from the
skies.

JOY IN SORROW.

THE wan November sun is westering;
The pale, proud year puts all her glory by;
Beneath her blue bare feet her vestures lie,
And white and faint she stands a-shivering:
And yet the world's great heart is quickening
Beneath dead leaves and grass grown sere and
dry,
And through the silence of the sombre sky
Throb swift pulsations of a forefelt spring.
So all our sorrow hath a core of bliss;
Some prophecy of pleasure tempers pain
In every heart, and through our bitterness
Strikes a fierce joy that not a pang is vain;
Life hath no hidden good that life shall miss,
For with all loss is mixed some god-like gain.

BLIND.

WHEN first my soul into the shadows sank,
And darkness surged upon me like a wave,
I fought the blackness, as a swimmer brave
Who, losing from his grasp the friendly plank,
Goes struggling down through ocean's great gray
blank.

Then, as one buried trance-bound in a grave
Wakes to the horror of his narrow cave,
And shuddering in his cere-cloths, cold and dank,
Strives to pierce through the void and noisome
gloom,

I strove to cleave the night that wrapped me
round,
And cried aloud from out my living tomb.

But now, always in solitude profound,
I sit and wait beneath my awful doom,
Till God's light shall break on me like a sound.

PATIENCE.

O GOD, I pray Thee give me quietude,
Though it be 'mid the wrecks of broken years;
Scatter Thou from mine eyes the blinding tears,
And cool the burning fever in my blood.
Lo! I am swept away as with a flood;
My soul is beaten on by stormy fears;
I cannot see, and ever through mine ears
Surge empty echoes of the solitude.
O, teach me to be patient and to wait;
Teach me to quell that spirit in my breast
Which irks the slow-paced hours, and cries, "Too
late!"
Urge on my heart this lesson—that 'twere best
To suffer even to death "without the gate,"
If so my soul might enter into rest.

WHEN I HAVE LIVED MY LIFE.

WHEN I have lived my life, and death at last
Sucks the sweet breath from out my white, cold
lips;
When o'er my fixed, faint eyes the swift eclipse
Of dissolution draws, and thick and fast
The shadows no man knows crowd up the vast
Dim vista of eternity; when dips
My final sun from sight, and darkness slips
Upon me, quenching utterly the past;
Then while fond friends around me weep and pray,
And come to kiss their last kiss, one by one,—
Ere yet hath faded quite the light of day,
And ere my mortal sands are fully run,—
God, grant that I may hear one dear Voice say,
With love and tenderness, "Well done! well
done!"

HOMESICK.

YEA, Lord, if it could be, if it could be,
That I might leave the weariness and pain
Of this sad exile o'er the soundless main,
Whose restless waters roll 'twixt me and Thee;
If—while the day grows wan and shadowy,
And, like a conqueror amid the slain,
Night moves with swift proud footsteps o'er the
plain—
Death's sudden messenger should come to me
With summons to depart, I should not go
As one to whom the journey were a fear,
But I should gladly leave earth's mimic show,
And these dim ways which are so chill and drear,
And 'mid green fields, where living waters flow,
Fare homeward after many a weary year.

“THOUGH HE SLAY ME, YET WILL
I TRUST IN HIM.”

WHEN these hot pulses cease, O Lord, and all
The fever and the strife at last are done;
When, for my feet, the race is well out-run,
And, spent and weary, from the lists I fall;
When, deaf to passion's cry and duty's call,
And reckless of the honors lost or won,
I turn my forehead toward the setting sun,
Calm and content to leave the world's rude brawl—
Then, Lord, for the sweet pity which Thou hast
Of those who, heavy-laden, worn with pain,
From out the conflict desolate and vast,
Cry unto Thee for help, nor cry in vain,
Grant to forget my weak and wandering past,
And help me trust Thee while my life is slain.

“SWEET ARE THE USES OF
ADVERSITY.”

YEA, could it be, yea, could it be, that so
From out this weltering rout of nights and days,
From out this wild and melancholy maze
Of thorny paths that wander to and fro,
We might at will to some fair country go,
Where hour by hour around the bloomy ways
The jasmine-scented, happy wind-breath plays,
And gurgling waters past broad meadows flow—
Then, would it better be, thus from this round
Of conflict, toil and tears, wherein men's thews
Are tried, to go where peans ne'er shall sound,
Nor gentle Pity weep her precious dew?
Ah no!—flowers crushed against the unconscious
ground
Give back their perfume to the feet that bruise.

THE LOVE UNSPEAKABLE.

“FOR God so loved the world”—O love divine!
Love which our human hearts but faintly feel;
Love whose vast depth no uttered words reveal;
Love which makes light in this dark soul of mine;
Behold! we know thee by this awful sign—
A cross whereon large drops of blood congeal,
A rock-hewn sepulcher, a shattered seal,
And a full cup with bitter tears for wine!
O love unspeakable! Dear love of God!
Love manifest in measureless sacrifice,
Teach us to walk the way which Christ hath trod,
Though sands should scorch our feet, and on
our eyes
Smite the fierce desert sun, and briers prod
Our shrinking flesh—till suffering makes us wise.

RIZPAH.

BLOWN through the gusty spaces of the night,
The pale clouds fleet like ghosts along the sky;
A fitful wind goes moaning feebly by,
And the faint moon, poised o'er the craggy height,
Dies in its own uncertain, misty light.

Within the hills the water-springs are dry;
The herbs are withered; and the sand-wastes lie
Dim, wide, and lonely to the weary sight.

Behold! her awful vigil she will keep

Through the wan night as through the burning
day;
Though all the world should sleep she will not
sleep,

But watch, wild-eyed and fierce, to scare away,
As round and round, with hoarse, low cries they
creep,

From her dead sons the hungry beasts of prey.

HAGAR.

WIDE wastes of sand beneath a brazen sky;
Far hills that shimmer in the breathless air;
And clumps of stunted shrubs that, here and
there,
With pale and parchèd leafage, vex the eye.
Her bread is spent, her water-skin is dry;
The child's faint sobbings pierce her with despair;
Her face is hid, her fallen head is bare;
"Now, O my God," she crieth, "let me die."
Hark! from the midmost heavens a deep sound:
"What aileth thee? Rise, Hagar, fear thee not,
For God hath heard the child's voice from the
ground,
And He will succor thee in thy sore lot."
Then she arose, and took the lad, and found
A crystal fountain in that desert spot.

CRÆSUS.

B. C. 546.

“O SOLON! Solon! wist ye of this hour,
When midst the splendors that thine eyes did see,
Undazzled by my gilded vanity,
Thou yet didst say how fleet is human power?
Lo! from this funeral pyre each flashing tower,
Each sapphire dome, each gate of ivory,
Makes all my court a hateful thing to me,
While here in death's grim shadow now I cower.”
So Cræsus cried when fiery death was nigh,
Remembering Sōlon's words of long ago;
Then the great Persian king, who paused hard by,
Heard the sore wailing of his fallen foe,
And said: “Unbind him thence, he shall not die;
Behold, one day I too shall be brought low!”

A CITY CRY.

HERE hoarsely moan the floods of human woe,
And evermore, along the busy streets,
The iron hoof of traffic loudly beats,
And lean-faced avarice shuffles to and fro;
Here grudgingly the feet of mercy go
Where gaunt and grimy squalor sits and eats
Her bitter bread, and here, through foul retreats,
Death's noisome currents darkly ebb and flow.
O God, of those sweet airs which blow between
The emerald hills, let me e'er breathe; keep me,
Far from the roaring city, in Thy green
And quiet solitudes, where I may see
The birds, the flowers, the grass, and sweetly lean
My heart upon the peace and love of Thee.

THE PROPHET'S END.

BETTER to hide the weary face awhile;
Better to let them have it as they will;
They would but mock thee, scourge thee, harry
still
Thy tired soul; go, cease thee from thy toil.
Flee from these dim vain ways where millions moil,
And wrangle for a bauble; let them fill
Each other's restless lives with strenuous ill—
Thou shalt be free at last from strife and guile.
Go to thy mother, child, and take thy sleep;
Go, lay thee, silent, in her cool wide arms;
Secure from troublous time, in her large keep
Thou shalt lie peaceful 'mid the world's alarms;
Go, get thee to thy mother-earth, and creep
Into her bosom, where no evil harms.

THE TRAVELER.

WHEN in the dark we slowly drift away
O'er unknown seas, and busy thoughts at last
Are quieted, and all the cares are past
That, bandit-like, infest the realms of day—
To what pale country does the spirit stray?
Within what wan-lit land, what region vast,
Does this strange traveler journey far and fast,
Till in the east the day breaks, cold and gray?
Ah, tell me, when we slumber, whither goes,
And whence at waking comes, the silent guest,
Whose face no man hath seen, whom no man
knows—
The dim familiar of each human breast?
Behold, at length, when day indeed shall close,
Will this uneasy traveler, too, have rest?

THE ANGEL OF NIGHT.

WITH dusky pinions spread, from out the land
Of twilight glides the angel of the night,
And earthward softly plumes her silent flight,
While gathering darkness from her wings is fanned
Across the cloud-world, musically and bland.

Around her flow her garments, sprent with stars,
As far away, toward the sunset bars,
She takes her noiseless flight, and from her hand
Scatters the balm of sleep on all below.

From off her wings she winnows silver dew
On slumbering flowers, whose aromas go
Far in Æolian wanderings, breaking through
Melodious silence in faint ebb and flow,
Till fair Aurora peeps from eastern blue.

ADAM.

THE chaste young world gleamed round him;
Paradise
All freshly radiant from the hand of God—
Its dewy ways by human feet untrod—
Revealed its virgin beauties to his eyes.
Above him soared the wondrous turquoise skies;
Beneath his feet rare flowers gemmed the sod;
And in the east he saw the morning, shod
With golden fire, behind the palms arise.
Not yet the Tempter, with his honeyed wiles,
Had entered earth to vex the peace thereof,
But spicy airs roved through the vine-wreathed aisles
And in the laurel cooed the turtle dove;
Still, cold and vain were Eden's balmiest smiles
To lonely Adam—lacking woman's love.

THE WATCHER.

Low hang the clouds, the clouds hang gray and low;
Upon the far hills falls the thin, cold rain;
The stream moans through the fields as one in
pain,
And madcap winds awake and wildly blow
The torn and ragged vapors to and fro
About the ruined garden, where in vain
One desolate bird, again and yet again,
Lifts up its single piercing note of woe.
Hour after hour, from yonder shivering wold,
The drenched leaves o'er the sodden meadows
fly,
Till solemnly the darkness, fold on fold,
Curtains the troubled world from every eye;
But ah! I still bend o'er her locks of gold,
And count each thread-like pulse, each fluttering
sigh.

WHEN NIGHT IS PAST.

AN, when the night is past, and morning breaks
Above the hills, and from the pastures gray
The folded mists steal silently away,
And every leaf its flashing jewels shakes;
When on the grass the dews burst into flakes
Of golden fire beneath the streaming day,—
Then from each vocal copse, and shrub, and spray
A ringing sound of exultation wakes.
So, Love, when death's chill night at length is done,
And from the couches we have pressed so long
We rise beneath the uncreated Sun,
Whose glory cloud nor gloom shall ever wrong,
For us Heaven's heights shall kindle, one by one,
And on our ears shall strike a sweet, new song.

SUNDERED.

I SHALL not touch her face, her hands again;
I shall not mingle her warm breath with mine;
I shall not drink again the nectared wine
Of her swift kisses, for dear Love is slain.
Yea, Love lies cold and dead; but pallid Pain,
Upon whose haggard cheeks the salt tears shine,
Hath set upon our brows her blood-red sign
Of hopeless anguish, like the mark of Cain.
Upon us Time hath wrought his change, for lo!
Not now we meet and pass as heretofore,
Each knowing that which none save us could know—
How full of love our hearts were to the core;
But now across life's wide waste fields we go
Our separate ways, to meet again no more.

W

FLOWN.

AGAIN in dreams thou comest to my side;
Again I hear thy voice, again I trace
The faultless features of thy sunny face—
Sweet eyes, pure brow, and dimpled cheeks where
hide
The frolic sunbeams; once again the wide
Fair fields smile round us, and thy maiden grace
Makes sudden light in every dusky place
Where all day long the dewy shadows bide.
But thou hast flown—ah! whither hast thou flown?
What mortal soul thy dwelling-place may guess?
With empty arms, and hopes like dead leaves blown,
Wearily up time's flinty steep I press;
Yet, O my Love, love's rugged way is known,
And I shall find thee crowned with blessedness.

OCTOBER.

OCTOBER lights her watch-fires on the hill,
For the days hasten, and the year declines;
The dusty grapes droop on yellowing vines,
Plumped with the sweets these last warm hours dis-
till.

The stream that loiters downward to the mill
Wimples amid its reeds and faintly shines.
At intervals, from out the darkling pines,
The squirrel repeats his challenge, loud and shrill.
In vain the sunlight weaves its golden snood
About the Earth; an unseen pillager,
Night after night, with fingers chill and rude,
Despoiling her frail beauty, plucks at her;
While morn by morn, o'er garden, field and wood,
The hoar-frost scatters its light minever.

ARCHERY.

I SEE them on a slope of English green;
 Their fair round arms are shining in the sun;
 I hear their bubbling, brook-like laughter run
From shade to shade about the lovely scene.
Again through shaggy boles I catch the sheen
 Of flowing tresses, as of red gold spun.
 The hurtling arrows sing as, one by one,
They cleave the shadows where the targets lean.
O Robin Hood, when with thine outlaws all
 Through merry Sherwood thou didst blithely rove,
Didst thou not with thy ladies, lithe and tall,
 Bend the long self-yew in the charmèd grove,
And while the tense cords rang, did it befall
 That round thee, too, flew viewless darts of love?

ON A FLY LEAF OF DANTE.

LET whoso enters here remember well,
That nevermore with unanointed eyes
Shall he to whom the palms of Paradise
Have waved a welcome, and the streets of Hell
Flamed with red terrors, walk where mortals dwell;
Henceforth he shall behold dim mysteries
In common things, and how men's destinies—
Love, hope and death—from obscure founts upwell.
Thus was it that, with vision sadly keen,
From shadowy realms of unimagined pain,
From sun-crowned heights of joy where thou hadst
 been,
Unto this babbling world thou cam'st again;
But always on thy woe, O Florentine,
Thy saint's sweet memory fell like summer rain.

A POET'S GRAVE.

I.

AY, grant it, friend, it is a lowly bed,
Pranked with the daisies that he held so dear,
And with the pale, pure violets nodding near,
Like those he clasped when first they found him
dead.

To curious questioners let it be said:

“He sang his songs the world paused not to hear,
And now he lieth where no late, slow tear
Can answer for the love he sought instead.”
Young? Yes, ah, very young he was to die;
He had so much to live for! His was joy
Unspeakable to see the morning lie
Upon the hills, and bliss without alloy
To see the sunset flush along the sky;
But dawn nor dusk shall wake him now—poor
boy!

II.

He loved the sunlight and he loved the rain;
He loved the darkness and he loved the light;
He loved the morning and he loved the night;
He loved the meadows and he loved the main.
To see the springtime blossom he was fain,
And winter's snows were goodly in his sight;
Yea, all the seasons in their rapid flight
Brought joy to him, though not unmixed with pain.

But now he lieth where the fallen leaf
 Begets no vague regret within his breast,
And never summer-tide, however brief,
 Can mar the sweetness of his hallowed rest.
He sleeps secure from dreams of joy or grief,
 And in his dreamless slumber he is blest.

EDMUND SPENSER.

How have the years flown since that golden day
When, where the Mulla rolls her dimpling flood,
Thou heard'st the birds sing in the Irish wood,
And Raleigh with thee on the upland lay!
Again through gloomy forests old and gray,
O'er many a waste and trackless solitude,
Whitherso'er thy Muse's knightly mood
May lead us in thy tale, we seem to stray.
O master, it was not on oaten reeds
Thou madest music for the world's delight,
Nor yet on Pan's shrill pipe didst thou e'er flute;
To sing of courtly grace and lordly deeds,
Of lovely Una and the Redcross Knight,
Behold! thou hadst Apollo's silver lute.

LONGFELLOW.

MARCH 24, 1882.

WITHIN the old historic house he lay,
Quiet at last in restless heart and brain;
Without his chamber the wan light did wane
And the March twilight gathered, chill and gray.
But all unheeding of the wasting day,
He lay and slept; and still he sleeps; in vain
The morning sun shall gild his window-pane—
His soul hath fared forth on an unknown way.
O sweetest psalmist of our Israel,
What new glad words now thrill upon thy tongue!
In what far country hast thou gone to dwell?
Through what fresh changes are thy numbers
rung?
Lo! thou didst leave us, taking no farewell,
And now we weep that thy last song is sung.

SALVE ET VALE.

(Robert Browning Died at Venice Dec. 12, 1889.)

FRIEND whom I never knew, hail and farewell!
On what far voyage hath thy spirit gone?
What darkling tides, mysterious and lone,
Against thy seaward prow upleap and swell?
What fine immortal strains have hushed the shell
Whereon thou mad'st a music all thine own?
Unto the distant coast whence they were blown,
What voices lure thee with resistless spell?
Lo! from the city's clanging thoroughfares,
From many a kindly face and friendly door,
From dew-wet fields, clear sounds and morning airs,
From all that thou hast loved and sung of yore,
Thou sett'st thy helm, and on thy brave bark bears
Thee to some dim and unimagined shore.

GRAPES OF ESCHOL.

WONDERING they came; they had strange tales to tell
Of purple hills and valleys half divine,
Of amber plains which did like morning shine,
And cool, clear springs which ever did upwell.
Wistful they came; and 'twixt them, like a bell,
Swung downward the dark grapes, the goodly sign
Of plenty in a land of oil and wine—
The goal of rest to way-worn Israel:
So I, a spy from realms where Summer sings
'Mid billowy fields with radiant blossoms starred,
Bring these the promisers of rarer things
That wait the coming of the chosen bard—
The shining soul who seeks life's mystic springs,
And counts no knowledge vain, no journey hard.

THE BELATED PIPER.

I KNOW that mine is but a bubbling pipe,
Blown in some lonely valley where the trees,
And flowers, and grass, and vagrant birds and
bees,
Alone the music hear; long since was ripe
The time for piping; now swart fingers wipe
The sweat from labor's brow, and weary knees
Faint in the market-place; yea, none seek ease
By streams where still some simple antitype
Of happy Pan trims him a slender reed
With nimble hands, and softly, sweetly winds
A tremulous melody. Yet every weed,
All common wayside herbs, and careless vines,
Teach the deep secret of our human need—
The calm man ever seeks but never finds.



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